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BATTALION COMMAND IN COMBAT - FORWARD EDGE OF COMBAT
POWER: A LEADERSHIP ANALYSIS OF SELECTED BATTALION
COMMANDERS IN COMBAT IN WORLD WAR II, KOREA AND
VIETNAM WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE COMBAT LEADERS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

RICK MEGAHAN, CPT, USA
A.A., New Mexico Military Institute, 1975
B.S., Eastern New Mexico University 1979

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1990

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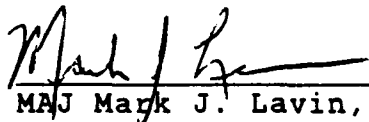
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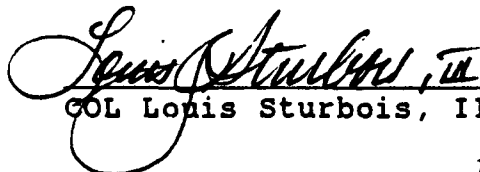
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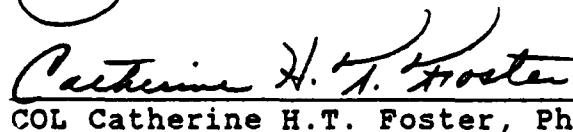
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ABSTRACT

**BATTALION COMMAND IN COMBAT - FORWARD EDGE OF COMBAT
POWER: A LEADERSHIP ANALYSIS OF SELECTED BATTALION
COMMANDERS IN COMBAT IN WORLD WAR II, KOREA AND
VIETNAM WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE COMBAT
LEADERS, by Captain Rick Megahan, USA, 386 pages.**

Based on the construction of detailed combat narratives and the application of current U.S. Army leadership doctrine as the assessment methodology, this study conducts a leadership analysis of three Distinguished Service Cross-winning battalion commanders of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. The performances of LTC Benjamin Vandervoort at St. Mere-Eglise on 6-7 June 1944, of LTC James H. Lynch at Hill 314 in Korea on 12 September 1950, and of LTC Harold Moore at LZ X-Ray in Vietnam on 14-16 November 1965 are examined in terms of the tasks, the skills, knowledge, and attitudes (SKA), and the leadership performance indicators (LPI) which support the nine leadership competencies of FM 22-100, Military Leadership.

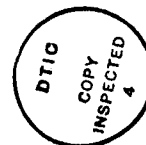
Foremost among the conclusions which are evident from this study are the following skills of battalion command which contribute to success in combat: rapid battlefield planning is vital to tactical flexibility and situational response; mission orders to subordinates is the most effective approach in combat; the commander must endeavor to maintain the initiative when confronting the enemy; fire support is crucial to infantry success; innovation, based on sound doctrine, is a catalyst for solving situational problems; commanders must coach subordinates during combat; communications is absolutely fundamental to success in combat; pre-battle training and the training conducted between engagements has great impact on soldier performance; casualty evacuation is one of the battalion commander's highest professional obligation; to succeed, the battalion commander must command forward; and, the battalion commander must define success for his subordinates.

This study concludes that the leadership competencies and their supporting SKA and LPI constitute a valid assessment tool for analyzing the combat performance of past - and future - battalion commanders. But on the whole, more of the warfighting focus of AirLand Battle doctrine should be incorporated into the performance standards to make the competencies more useful as a leadership evaluation tool during field training exercises or rotations at the National Training Center or the Joint Readiness Training Center.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

It is possible that we study the giants of military history (who may be born rather than made) and too little the performance of the sergeants, captains, and colonels on whose collective shoulders so much rests.¹

LTG Walter Ulmer

The purpose of this thesis is to conduct a study of those "colonels" Lieutenant General Ulmer alludes to - the officers who have commanded battalions in combat - and determine what they did to be successful light infantry battalion commanders of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. The intent of the investigation is to ascertain what demonstrated leadership competencies of these battalion commanders contributed to battlefield success.

The battalion commander holds the most important job in the army. He is the vital link between strategic and operational maneuver and tactical execution of plans at the small unit team level. His command is the essence of tactical command.²

The battalion commander is the closest senior leader to see and fight the battle.³ He synchronizes decisive combat power at the forward edge of battle. He skillfully employs the dynamics of maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership in a unique environment which must withstand the extraordinary stress of combat.⁴ Obscure situations, compressed time for decisions which

must incorporate risk and initiative, and the psychological weight of personnel and materiel losses dramatically demonstrate that the most essential element of combat power is the competent and confident leadership of the battalion commander.⁵

Future infantry battalion commanders must be capable of leading their units on battlefields characterized by dispersed formations and independence of action. AirLand Battle doctrine and recent contingency operations clearly signal that successful leadership of battalions in combat operations has taken on an increased significance. Therefore, the training of future infantry battalion commanders for command in combat assumes an even greater importance.

But battalion-level leadership in combat has not received the scholarly attention it deserves. A great deal has been written about the "Great Captains" and the combat leadership of division, corps, and army commanders, but virtually nothing has been published about battalion commanders. A cursory review of National Training Center and Joint Readiness Training Center Lessons-Learned suggests a need for more emphasis on the study of battalion and task-force level combat leadership.⁶ This is the point where future combat battalion commanders must turn to military history. The question then becomes: what skills of command of battalions in combat can be

learned from a study of selected combat battalion commanders of the past?

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The primary purpose of this study was to determine what skills of command of battalions in combat can be learned from a study of selected light infantry combat battalion commanders in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. A secondary purpose was to highlight the requirements for a more exact definition of success on the battlefield to fill the void in current doctrine. A third purpose was to identify an existing void in battalion-level leadership literature, and recommend that further research aim at fulfilling this need. A fourth purpose was to "test fire" the nine leadership competencies outlined in FM 22-100, Military Leadership, for suitability as historical indicators and as assessment or evaluation guidelines for future leaders. Lastly, this study was intended to underscore the need for a more thorough, combat leadership intensive training course for battalion command designees.

Analysis of the Problem

In order to achieve a solution to the research problem, a number of subordinate questions had to be answered:

1. What are the overtly measurable criteria for success in commanding a battalion in combat? Could a

historical analysis of past battalion commanders reveal basic tenets of battlefield success?

2. Do the leadership competencies outlined in FM 22-100 (approved final draft, 30 June 1989), Appendix A, provide a framework for a historical assessment of battalion commanders in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam?

Assumptions

The following assumptions are integral to this study:

1. That the nine leadership competencies of FM 22-100 constitute a valid comparative devise for leadership competencies of light infantry battalion commanders in combat, 1942-1975.

2. That there is consistency among successful combat leaders regardless of historical period, country, or condition of combat.⁷

3. That the success of the battalion in accomplishing its mission is a result of the leadership competency of the battalion commander.⁸

4. That "the single most important factor in creating a successful battalion is the leadership of the battalion commander."⁹

5. That the application of combat leadership is an essential ingredient of success on the AirLand battlefield and that AirLand Battle doctrine is leadership intensive.

6. That the selection of infantry battalion commanders who have been awarded the Distinguished Service

Cross for their superior leadership under fire and the resultant success of their respective battalions in accomplishing assigned missions is an acceptable sampling process for this study.

7. That the selection of one DSC winner from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam will provide a reasonable balance to the study.

Delimitations of the Problem

The following parameters were established for this study:

1. The study did not attempt to delve into the personal lives of commanders to find outstanding personality or behavioral traits. Only brief background information was provided in order to establish context.

2. The study did not investigate the means by which the individuals in the thesis were selected for battalion command.

3. World War I commanders were not studied due to research constraints.

4. Medal of Honor winning battalion commanders were not studied in order to maintain study selection consistency.

5. Only recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross were studied.

6. This study did not attempt to examine pre-command training for the battalion commanders listed in this thesis. In addition, no attempt was made to

review tactical doctrine as it may have applied to the period being studied. Likewise, the study did not attempt to compare or contrast tactics, techniques, or procedures inherent in each of the periods studied.

7. Only light infantry battalion commanders were studied.

Limitations

The overriding limitation to the study of selected infantry combat battalion commanders of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam is that there are few definitive historical accounts which are focused on battalion level. As a result, this limited the selection of commanders to those DSC winners with adequate supporting primary or secondary source material. This field was even further reduced because of the difficulty in obtaining information on the circumstances surrounding the DSC-winning performance. A fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1973, destroyed the records of all officers who departed the Army between 1917 and 1959. As a result, many commanders were selected because they are still living and could be contacted for interviews.

Finally, conclusions of this study are relevant only to command of light infantry battalions in combat.

Importance of the Study

The AirLand Battle doctrine of the U.S. Army is leadership intensive doctrine. It is the battalion

commander who translates operational warfighting doctrine into the realities of fire and maneuver on the modern non-linear battlefield. As the possibility of low-intensity conflict becomes more and more likely, future light infantry battalion commanders will find themselves conducting missions at the forward edge of contingency operations in support of national military strategy. It is imperative that future light infantry battalion commanders fully know what it takes to lead successfully in battle. Extended weapons lethality, rapidity of deployment, and the unforgiving responsibility for insuring that the light infantry battalion is extremely well trained for combat calls for future leaders who have the right "stuff" to fight and win. Future leaders obtain the "stuff" which results in success in combat by looking to the past for examples of sound leadership under fire. Then, according to Field Marshall Earl Wavell, future combat commanders should

take particular situations, and as far as possible get inside the skin of the man who made a decision and then see in what way you could have improved upon it.¹⁰

This study is important in that it provides some situations for future light infantry battalion commanders to learn what successful leadership in combat entails. Viewed in the context of the nine leadership competencies, this study may be used to assist in the development of

additional literature on combat leadership for inclusion in focused pre-command training programs.

Definitions

The following terms are integral to the study and are defined here for clarification:

a. Light Infantry Battalion: the essence of tactical command. Composed of footmobile fighters who are organized, equipped, and trained to be habitually employed in close, restrictive terrain. The battalion is organized with three to five rifle companies, which are normally commanded by captains. The battalion is organized to have utility at all levels of intensity and is capable of mission accomplishment under all environmental conditions.¹² Light infantry battalions have limited combat support and combat service support but are capable of small-unit independent operations at considerable distances from command and control headquarters. The tactics of a light infantry battalion are a combination of multiple, small unit operations that capitalize on surprise and attacks on the flanks and rear of the enemy.¹³ A close-in fight in urban terrain is perfectly suited to light infantry units.¹⁴ Inclement weather and night operations are normal operating conditions of the light infantry battalion.

b. Leadership: FM 22-100 defines leadership as "the process of influencing others to accomplish the

mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation."¹⁵

c. Combat Leadership: leadership under fire is characterized by unique demands inherent to the situation which confronts the commander. Combat leadership requires the commander to be a combat manager.¹⁶ He must prudently employ men and materiel in the economical and effective accomplishment of a mission.¹⁷ The commander exercises leadership - influencing others by providing purpose, direction, and motivation - under circumstances which rarely allow time for detailed planning or elaborate preparations.¹⁸ Combat leadership calls for rapid decision making based on brief, first-hand observations and estimates of the situation, followed by face-to-face dissemination of instructions and reliance on Standing Operating Procedures for covering anything other than the bare essentials.¹⁹

d. Senior Leadership: senior leadership is defined in FM 22-103, Leadership and Command at Senior Levels as "the art of direct and indirect influence and the skill of creating the conditions for sustained organizational success to achieve the desired results."²⁰ Though not directly stated in this manual, senior leadership begins with the battalion commander.²¹ As opposed to the junior leaders in the organization - the captains and lieutenants - the battalion commander is a senior leader because "his focus

becomes one of building teams and exerting influence through subordinate commanders and staffs."²² These imperatives of senior leadership - provide purpose, direction, and motivation - are exactly the same as the basic definition of leadership found in FM 22-100. However, it is the implementation of these imperatives that differentiates between junior and senior leaders. Vision is how the senior leader effectively implements the imperatives; it is his personal concept of providing purpose, direction, and motivation to the unit at his level of leadership.²³ The definition of senior leadership is crucial to the analysis of battalion commanders in combat because it recognizes that there are different levels of leadership and that it is at battalion-level that we first see the identification of concerns for "organizational leadership."

e. Successful Battalion Commander in Combat: for this study, a successful battalion commander in combat is recognized as the light infantry battalion senior leader who has exercised extremely efficient command and control of his organization in the midst of the extraordinary stress of battle; accomplished assigned missions; was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for conspicuous gallantry and leadership under fire while completing all assigned missions.

Organization of the Study

Chapter One introduces the study; states the purpose of the thesis; analyzes the subordinate questions; lists assumptions integral to the study; presents delimitations and limitations to the thesis; describes the importance of the study; and provides definitions of select terms inherent to the study. Chapter Two presents a review of the extant literature relevant to the research question. Chapter Three discusses the method used to collect data and describes the model used for the analysis of selected battalion commanders in combat. Chapter Four is the study and analysis of the combat leadership of LTC Benjamin Vandervoort, 2d Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division, Eastern Theatre of Operations, WWII, 1944. Chapter Five is the study and analysis of the combat leadership of LTC James H. Lynch, 3d Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cav Division, Korea, 1950. Chapter Six is the study and analysis of LTC Harold Moore, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 3d Brigade, 1st Cav Division, Vietnam, 1965. Chapter Seven summarizes the findings of the study and states conclusions deduced from the study. Included are observations and recommendations for further research in the field of battalion-level combat leadership.

ENDNOTES

¹ Lloyd J. Matthews and Dale E. Brown, ed., The Challenge of Military Leadership, p. xvi.

² Arthur S. Collins, Jr., "Tactical Command," The Challenge of Military Leadership, p. 49.

³ MAJ Lawrence M. Steiner, Jr., "A Study of the Individual Leadership Skills and Traits that Armor Battalion Commanders must Possess in Order to be Successful in Combat and Noncombat Situations," p. i.

⁴ FM 7-72, Light Infantry Battalion, p. 2-2.

⁵ MAJ Simonsen, CPT Frandsen and CPT Hoopengardner, "Excellence in the Combat Arms," p. 1.

⁶ MAJ Samuel C. Endicott and Dr. Earl C. Pence, Army Research Institute, "NTC Leadership Lessons Learned," p. 8.

⁷ LTC K. E. Hamburger, Dir., "Leadership in Combat: An Historical Appraisal," p. 1.

⁸ Steiner, p. 3.

⁹ Simonsen, p. 36.

¹⁰ Jay Luvaas, "Military History: Is it Still Practicable?" The Parameters of War, p. 13.

¹¹ FM 7-72, p. 1-5.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., p. i.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ FM 22-100, p. 1-3.

¹⁶ COL Samuel H. Hays and LTC William N. Thomas, ed., Taking Command, p. 247.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 247-248.

²⁰ FM 22-103, p. 3.

²¹ Classroom discussions with MAJ Barbie, CAL Instructor, CGSC, September 1989.

²² FM 22-103, p. 3.

²³ MAJ William G. Butler, "How Should the Brigade and Division Commander Assess Success or Failure on the AirLand Battlefield?" p. 2.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

While the related literature on leadership is quite extensive, there is no definitive body of source material directly pertaining to the combat leadership of battalion commanders. Consequently, a fairly wide range of sources will be examined to facilitate breadth, scope, context, and content of the study.

Initially, U.S. Army doctrinal manuals on leadership and command have formed the foundation for the study. Background information on leadership principles, traits, attributes, characteristics, and competencies is fundamental to the development of the analysis model used in the study. Worthy of a separate study is the evolution of U.S. Army leadership doctrine, particularly in terms of the emphasis placed on the "be, know, do" of combat leadership. For this thesis, though, a doctrinal "pyramid" was formed as the framework for source compilation.

The chief source document is FM 100-5, Operations, without which no examination of past leadership and related AirLand Battle future implications could proceed. FM 100-5 forms the base of the doctrinal pyramid of this study. Especially significant to this study is the treatment in FM 100-5 of the practices of "auftragstaktik" and decentralized decision authority. AirLand Battle

Doctrine is leadership-intensive doctrine. FM 100-5 describes leadership as the "most essential element of combat power" and states that "no challenge exceeds leadership in importance."¹ FM 100-5 recognizes that "leadership requirements differ with unit size and type" and that "leaders at lower levels will play equally important parts in winning the smaller engagements that make up battles."² Superior combat power is generated to win these engagements through a skillful synchronization of maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership.³ As a result, "no peacetime duty is more important for leaders than studying their profession and preparing for war."⁴ Hence, this study on battalion commanders in combat.

The second side of the doctrinal pyramid is FM 22-100, Military Leadership. FM 22-100 currently exists in approved final draft format. FM 22-100 is the specific start point for this study. The leadership competencies outlined in Appendix A will be used as the assessment device for combat battalion commanders in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. The key elements of Army leadership doctrine - leadership factors, principles and competencies - have been derived from a study of past leaders. FM 22-100 addresses applying the time-tested competencies in a direct, face-to-face mode in units. The highest level of direct leadership - and the transition point from direct leadership to indirect, senior leadership - is

generally agreed to be at battalion command level. This reinforces the need for a study of command of battalions in combat in association with current leadership doctrine.

The third side of the doctrinal pyramid of this study is FM 22-103, Leadership and Command at Senior Levels. The focus of this manual is on the leadership of large organizations where indirect leadership is more prevalent. This takes place primarily at brigade, division and corps but battalion level is included as well in regard to the commander's ability to promote his vision of success on the battlefield. This manual affords a different perspective on the nine leadership competencies in that they are examined as they apply to subordinate commanders and staff.

LTC Vandervoort

The study of the combat leadership of LTC Vandervoort at St. Mere-Eglise, France, 6 June-20 July 1944 begins with Gordon A. Harrison's Cross-Channel Attack (1951). This volume covers invasion planning, the D-Day assault, and combat operations subsequent to the landings until 1 July 1944. American Forces in Action volume Utah Beach to Cherbourg (1947) describes the amphibious landings at corps-level and below and the course of VII Corps combat operations culminating in the capture of Cherbourg on 27 June 1944. Two other green books round out the U.S. Army Center of Military History publications used for the study of Vandervoort at Normandy: Omaha

Beachhead (1945) and St. Lo (1946). The first volume handles all U.S. military operations in Normandy from 6-13 June 1944; the latter volume outlines the First Army offensive during the first three weeks of July 1944 which were intended to expand the beachhead and set the stage for the breakout from Normandy.

LTC Ben Vandervoort's 2d Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division had the D-Day, 6 June 1944 mission of blocking the approach of German reinforcements from Cherbourg to the key town of St. Mere-Eglise. Events after the parachute assault led to Vandervoort making some of the best tactical decisions of the war, and certainly crucial to the success of the Utah Beach landings.⁵ His actions are chronicled in the 505th Regimental Study #4, The Capture of St. Mere-Eglise, (1945). S.L.A. Marshall assisted in the development of this study and from it published Night Drop (1962), which is a principal source on Vandervoort and his battalion. LTG James M. Gavin describes Vandervoort's phenomenal tactical decisions and courage at St. Mere-Eglise in On To Berlin (1978). Gavin's book is important because it provides a senior leader's perspective on Vandervoort's actions at St. Mere-Eglise. Gavin, as the Assistant Division Commander of the 82d Airborne Division, commanded Task Force A during the parachute assault into Normandy. Task Force A consisted of three regiments - 505, 507, and

508 - organized to secure the flank of the Utah Beach landings. He became personally involved in the fight for the vital causeways over the Merderet River, and was intimately aware of the significance - operational significance - of Vandervoort's performance. As the former commander of the 505th Regiment, and veteran of two combat jumps prior to Normandy, Gavin had selected Vandervoort for battalion command.⁶ He knew Vandervoort well: Vandervoort had been a company commander and regimental S-3 in the 505th for Gavin.⁷ It is not too difficult to discern the amount of influence Gavin had in the development of Vandervoort's training methods and leadership competencies.⁸

Matthew Bunker Ridgway's command philosophy can also be seen in Ben Vandervoort. Clay Blair effectively articulates this and other essential command perspectives of the Normandy jump in Ridgway's Paratroopers (1985). Ridgway knew his battalion commanders because he was never far from the hottest action. He considered Vandervoort one of the toughest, bravest combat commanders he ever knew.⁹ Blair describes Ridgway's view of the enormity of Vandervoort's decision-making and personal leadership at St. Mere-Eglise, and how the grateful division commander awarded Vandervoort the Distinguished Service Cross.

General Napier Crookenden's Drop Zone Normandy (1976) records the actions of the airborne and glider

forces engaged in the air assault ahead of the seaborne forces on D-Day, 6 June 1944. His account of Vandervoort at St. Mere-Eglise is not only flavored by the knowledge of personal experience and the perspective of command, but is based on an extensive interview with Vandervoort while both visited Holland in 1974.

Although S.L.A. Marshall's historiography has recently come under attack, his Night Drop (1962) is still a venerable source on Vandervoort's performance at St. Mere-Eglise. Marshall provides a grassroots treatment of Vandervoort's use of LT Turner Turnball's platoon and his guidance of LT Waverly Wray's superb fighting at St. Mere-Eglise. At the point of contention comes Ready, a history of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment in World War II written by Allen L. Langdon, a former member of the regiment. Langdon apologizes in his introduction for being "at least 35 years late"¹⁰ in publishing the 505th story, and immediately remarks that because no unit history appeared after World War II, considerable erroneous history about the regiment was perpetuated in numerous works since 1945.¹¹ Langdon's work is the principal source for the study of Vandervoort and 2/505 at St. Mere-Eglise.

A couple of other additional works round out the source material for the study of LTC Vandervoort. Gerard Devlin's Paratrooper is a mammoth single volume account of every air assault operation fought in Europe or the

Pacific in World War II. Devlin devotes five pages to Vandervoort and the fight for St. Mere-Eglise.

No single volume provides the spell-binding emotionalism and individual courage involved in the Normandy parachute operation than Cornelius Ryan's The Longest Day. Ryan's short account of Vandervoort's fighting attitude is instructive because it does give a clue to the core of the combat leadership philosophy of this quiet, soft-spoken leader.

The reknowned military historian John Keegan describes the airborne assault into Normandy and highlights the actions of Vandervoort and LT Turner Turnball in his book, Six Armies in Normandy (1987). Keegan sees Vandervoort as "an eighteenth century Spanish general miraculously endowed with a lion heart" as he is wheeled toward St. Mere-Eglise in a small farm cart.¹²

LTC Lynch

The actions of LTC James H. Lynch and his superb 3d Battalion, 7th Cav Regiment in Korea in September 1950 clearly ranks as one of the most amazing accounts of small-unit military history. Formed hastily from former personnel of the 30th Infantry Regiment at Ft. Benning, and augmented with cooks and truck drivers assigned as infantrymen, the 2d Provisional Battalion was rushed toward Korea. Scheduled to land in Japan and hoping for time to assimilate the few World War II veterans with the reclassified riflemen, the battalion was instead sent

directly to Pusan, arriving on 30 August 1950. Now designated the 3d Battalion, 7th Cav, this organization of "school troops" and support troops was immediately committed to battle.¹³ In spite of these disadvantages, 3/7 Cav would prove to be an outstanding unit. By the end of September 1950, the battalion would be awarded an unprecedented two Presidential Unit Citations for superior combat performance. Its commander, LTC James H. Lynch, would be awarded two Distinguished Service Crosses in the same time period.¹⁴

The basic source for the study of LTC Lynch is Clay Blair's The Forgotten War (1988). There is no doubt that Blair's 1,136-page work is the best single-volume treatment of the Korean War. Blair and his wife initiated their research for The Forgotten War with a close study of another great source, Roy Appleman's South to the Nakdong, North to the Yalu (1950). Blair leans heavily on Appleman's papers for the discussion of Lynch's DSC-winning performance in taking Hill 314, north of Taegu, on 12 September 1950.

However, the best source for a study of LTC Lynch and 3d Battalion, 7th Cav is Robert J. Best's The Structure of a Battle: Analysis of a UN-UK Action North of Taeju, Korea, September 1950 (1955). Not only is this work the most exhaustive account of Lynch and his battalion, it is clearly the standard for battle analysis at the small unit level. Originally intended to uncover a

"pattern of battle from which it may be possible to define in measure the part played by certain factors and component relationships, such as terrain, casualties, and firepower, and the cause-effect mechanism by which a battle progresses," this study quantified data "with a view toward the development of computer methods and war-gaming techniques of operations analysis."¹⁵

According to Robert J. Best, "particular attention is given to what is considered to be the key action of the conflict - the capture of Hill Mass 314 by the 3d Battalion of the 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division."¹⁶

LTC Moore

Source material pertaining to DSC-winning infantry battalion commanders and their units in Vietnam is nowhere near as prevalent as for World War II and Korean War units. The notable exception to the lack of sources is the amount of material available on LTC Harold G. "Hal" Moore and his 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cav Division. Moore is famous for his successful "stand-up" fight with the NVA regulars at LZ X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley, Pleiku province, Vietnam, 14-16 November 1965. The chief source used in the study of Hal Moore's combat leadership at LZ X-Ray is Seven Firefights in Vietnam written by John A. Cash, John Albright, and Allan W. Sandstrum. The first chapter of this book is dedicated to an accounting of LTC Moore's fight at Ia Drang. This

segment is written by Cash, an infantry major who commanded a company, served on brigade staff, and participated in the action at Ia Drang with the 1st Cav Division.¹⁷ Cash delves nicely into Moore's leadership and decision-making during the three days at LZ X-Ray.

An equally vital source for Moore's fight at LZ X-Ray is J. D. Coleman's Pleiku (1988). Coleman, a retired lieutenant colonel who served with the 1st Cavalry Division "from start to finish,"¹⁸ has written about "the development of the airmobile concept and the ultimate testing of that concept in the crucible of combat."¹⁹ Coleman's book describes the 1st Cav Division's Pleiku campaign.

Coleman used not only his own after-action report on the Pleiku campaign (he wrote the official 1st Cav Division AAR as a captain with the division) but he cited heavily from John A. Cash's monograph on LZ X-Ray.²⁰

In Anatomy of a Division (1987), Shelby L. Stanton writes that the 1st Cav Division was designed and destined for offensive action and no single engagement demonstrated the validity of the air assault concept as strikingly as the action at LZ X-Ray.

One slightly contentious source is George C. Herring's chapter "The 1st Cavalry and the Ia Drang Valley, 18 October-24 November 1965" in America's First Battles, 1776-1965 (1986). Herring brings an interesting perspective to the study of LTC Moore and LZ X-Ray. He

writes that the unusually bloody, savage, and close-quarter fighting in the Ia Drang Valley was the first head-on clash and classic blood bath between two very different types of armies.²¹

Beginning his study Airmobility 1961-1971 (1973) with a poignant dedication to airmobile battalion commanders killed in Vietnam, LTC John J. Tolson writes that Moore had every reason to be proud of the performance of his unit at LZ X-Ray.²² To Tolson, though, Moore deserves high praise for his actions as battalion commander at LZ X-Ray, as his unit killed 634 NVA ("actual body count") and did not leave a single U.S. soldier - dead or alive - behind on LZ X-Ray.²³

One other source of interest for the study of Hal Moore at LZ X-Ray is Infantry in Vietnam: Small Unit Actions in the Early Days, 1965-1966, edited by LTC Albert N. Garland of Infantry magazine. In a short chapter entitled "Isolated at Ia Drang", SSG Clyde E. Savage describes his combat experience as member of 2d Platoon, Company B, of Moore's battalion.

Lastly, an interesting source is LTC David R. Campbell's monograph "Fighting Encircled: A Study in U.S. Army Leadership" (1987). Moore is considered encircled at LZ X-Ray in November 1965. Campbell grades Moore and his battalion "very effective" in chain of command, leadership, troop morale, casualty handling, communications, fire support, and resupply.²⁴ Campbell

counts the encirclement of 1st Bn, 7th Cav at LZ X-Ray as "a resounding tactical and operational success in all phases."²⁵ To Campbell, "leadership was paramount in the success story", and it is strong leadership by the encircled commander which accounts for success.²⁶

A large number of monographs have been consulted to round out the research and provide a perspective on leadership in combat. For example, the papers presented at the eleventh general working meeting of the Military Conflict Institute at the U.S. Army War College, 12-15 October 1988, deal with command, control and leadership. Lieutenant General Dave R. Palmer's paper "On Command and Combat" emphasizes the leadership techniques of battalion and division combat commanders. Colonel Frederick W. Timmerman's paper "Leadership and Command at Senior Levels" focuses on the development of team, unit and organizational capabilities through vision. The presentation is clearly an encapsulation of FM 22-103. Colonel Howard J. Prince's "Leadership in Combat" views combat leadership as a "gap-closing exercise" in which the leader assimilates the organizational goal with individual needs at the performance of mission tasks.²⁷ Colonel (Ret) T. N. Dupuy's excellent presentation "In Search of an American Philosophy of Command and Control" points out that mutual understanding between superiors and subordinates is the essence of the command and control concept. This thought-provoking paper also highlights

such key topics as communications (when does data become information?), feedback (the tendency of high level commanders to interfere with low-level leaders), and delegation of authority (an expedient for the senior leader who cannot, unfortunately, do everything himself?).²⁸

A fair amount of School of Advanced Military Studies monographs have been instrumental in the formulation of the thesis outline. MAJ William G. Butler's work "How Should the Brigade and Division Commander Assess Success or Failure on the AirLand Battlefield" provides thoughts on the commander's obligation to define success in battle and make decisions during the course of battle which are based on an accurate assessment of the indicators of success or failure. MAJ Butler's proposed method of assessment - the commander's identification of the critical element of the battle²⁹ - will be useful as a tool for analyzing the combat situation assessment processes of the battalion commanders in this study.

SAMS monographs by MAJ Robert W. Mixon, Jr., MAJ Leon H. Rios, MAJ David M. Cowan and MAJ John M. Vermillion concentrate on aspects of command and control which are salient to any review of combat leadership. In "Taking the Ultimate Risk: Commanding and Controlling Maneuver Forces in Tactical Deep Operations", MAJ Mixon uses the examples of Darby at Cisterna, Patton at

Hammelburg, Rommel at Bir Hachem - Gazala, Clarke and Wood at Nancy; Stilwell at Myitkyina, and Sharon at Abu Agheila to point out that commanders on the AirLand Battlefield need an "intent-command" system to orchestrate the fighting.³⁰ "Intent-command" calls for subordinate commanders to be "virtual shadows" of the senior leader in terms of doctrinal thinking. A definition of success must be articulated by the senior leader and understood by all subordinate commanders.³¹ The senior leader must insure his subordinate commanders understand and implement, at their respective level, the same technique of assessing the combat situation. Personal example is the standard technique for command.³² Trust among members of the chain of command must be achieved if operations are expected to continue when communications are disrupted. Imaginitive and improvised tactics, divorced from many routine methods, enables the commanders at every echelon to position themselves to assess the facts and possibilities of the moment and act quickly.³³ Mission orders are delivered "face-to-face", where feedback is instantaneous. As Major General John S. Wood of the 4th Armored Division explained about his frequent absence from division headquarters, "If you can't see it happen, it's too late to hear about it back in a rear area and meet it with proper force."³⁴ But can this type of command really be implemented at battalion level?

MAJ David M. Cowan thinks it can. In "Auftragstaktik: How Low Can You Go?" Cowan points out that the philosophy of auftragstaktik is not a phenomena of high command. At battalion level, communication of orders, confidence in leaders and subordinates, and command climate are contributors to success.³⁵ These points may very well be additional criteria in the analysis of combat battalion commanders. Transmission of the commander's intent - the "INTCOM" of Nixon's paper - remains of paramount importance. But how is INTCOM best exercised in battalions?

MAJ Leon H. Rios writes in "Will, Technology, and Tactical Command and Control" that the Army is becoming increasingly dependent on technical command and control systems which seem to subvert the notions of decentralized control and mission orders of AirLand Battle doctrine. Command and control is seen by MAJ Rios as

the arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities and procedures by a commander into a system to gather and provide information, direct, plan, synchronize and control the force in combat to accomplish a mission in accordance with his intent. To be effective, all elements must function before, during and after battle.³⁶

Rios then integrates this definition of command and control into a process which incorporates the tenets of AirLand Battle: a) a credible assessment of a situation including the environment, friendly forces and enemy forces (read METT-T); b) an objective description of the commander's will to suit several contingencies (read

clearly articulated intent and definition of success); c) the communication and selection of several courses of action (read assessment of the indicators of success); d) the communication of situation, decision and orders; e) the focusing of combat power to achieve the commander's will (intent) which is the end product (defined object of success) in an AirLand Battle.³⁷ Thus, the commander's C² system must help him perform four interdependent functions: assessment, objective decision to focus will, planning, and execution.³⁸ The bottom line is that commanders should not rely on technology to "communicate" these functions. Auftragstaktik, subordinates mirroring the commander's doctrinal thinking and assessment techniques, and trust and confidence are essential - not gadgetry.³⁹ Rios' command and control definition is helpful in the analysis of combat battalion commanders.

MAJ John M. Vermillion believes commanders should employ auftragstaktik to the maximum extent possible in their command and control philosophy. He remarks that decentralized tactical control is no longer a matter of choice, but a combat imperative.⁴⁰ But Vermillion only uses examples of auftragstaktik at division and corps level and thus escapes any definitive solution to the question of decentralized command and control at battalion level. Nevertheless, his argument that commanders must know the talents of subordinates, train them to grasp intent and act independently, and never fail to give them

the freedom to act sounds like a leadership competency worth examining.⁴¹

Achieving excellence in training and in combat has been well described in the 1984 Naval Postgraduate School study by MAJ Jerry H. Simonsen and CPTs Herbert L. Frandsen and David A. Hoopengardner. "Excellence in Combat Arms" is an essential source for this study on combat battalion commanders because it highlights the key to success - the battalion commander - and identifies the "pillars of excellence" which define success on the battlefield.⁴² Success starts with enlightened, power-down, personal-example type leadership.⁴³ The focus of excellent battalions is on combat; every soldier in the battalion has a stake in mission accomplishment and is involved in the creation and consistent attainment of high standards of discipline and performance. "Excellence in the Combat Arms" is a good yardstick for measuring the level of excellence in the combat battalions analyzed in this study.

A complimentary work to "Excellence in the Combat Arms" is the Center for Army Lessons Learned paper, "Fort Hood Leadership Study". Prepared in 1985, this paper describes how LTG Walter Ulmer, III Corps Commander, had implemented the "power down" leadership philosophy at Fort Hood, Texas. The power down objective was to create a command climate that would produce and support a force ready to go to war quickly and effectively; a command

climate that would encourage and ensure the development of leaders able and willing to show initiative and to use common sense in achieving their commanders' objectives; a command climate that would tap the potential of all the soldiers, would enhance morale and commitment, and thereby would promote the readiness of the organization to operate as a whole when possible, and as independent elements when necessary.⁴⁴

The Fort Hood Leadership Study provides another look at the effort of enlightened, AirLand Battle, auftragstaktik-style leadership on an organization. From the perspective of this study of battalion commanders in combat, the Fort Hood Study points out the absolute requirement for leaders at all levels who are technically proficient and who are willing and able to exercise initiative on future battlefields.⁴⁵ "The Fort Hood Study" helps to address any potential correlation between the performance of combat battalion commanders of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam and the performance demanded of AirLand Battle leaders.

While it is not within the scope of the thesis to discuss peacetime training programs and how they can, or cannot, contribute to success in combat, many superb papers were reviewed which discussed leadership training. The study of these papers provided an idea of what conclusions may be drawn from a look at combat battalion

commanders and how the conclusions may be translated into effective leadership training programs.

One such paper was prepared by the Chief of Military Psychiatry at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Dr. David H. Marlowe. Entitled "Leadership Training Considerations", Dr. Marlowe expresses the basic point that the American corporation adversarial model has taken hold in the Army and that officers, NCOs and soldiers see each other as different interest groups with different objectives. He then makes a sound argument for organizational leadership called "the professional team".⁴⁶ The professional team is a well-bonded collection of professional and technical experts which focuses on the real end-product, performance in combat.

Dr. Marlowe also asks some interesting questions which are worthy of consideration in the study of combat battalion commanders: What leads to combat success? What does an effective combat unit look like? Does "unit culture" create behavioral stability and effectiveness in combat? How does the leader teach subordinates to think for themselves, lead for themselves, and take over for him in combat?

Significant other sources have served the research plan. Cecil B. Currey's Follow Me and Die: The Destruction of an American Division in World War II and John G. Smyth's Leadership in War, 1939-1945: The Generals in Victory and Defeat provide examples of

unsuccessful battalion commanders. The 1983 Army War College text Army Command and Management: Theory and Practice has been useful. Military Leadership: In Pursuit of Excellence edited by Robert L. Taylor and William E. Rosenbach and Leadership on the Future Battlefield, edited by James G. Hunt and John D. Blair offers critical insights into organizational leadership. Senior Leadership: An Annotated Bibliography of the Military and Non-Military Literature is indispensable in locating source material. MG Aubrey Newman's Follow Me and LTG Edward Flanagan's Before the Battle are the basic building blocks for any study of leadership. Of course, the entire collection of COL Mike Malone's writings are essential to leadership studies. Especially good are his Small Unit Leadership and his essays contained in The Trail Watcher, FORSCOM Miscellaneous Publications 600-1.

The literature review has provided the essential historical parameters, or "sand box", wherein each of the battalion commanders may be analyzed. Next, Chapter 3 discusses the methodology for the analysis of the combat leadership performance of each of the battalion commanders in terms of current U.S. Army leadership doctrine.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ FM 100-5, Operations, p. 13.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ LTG James M. Gavin, On To Berlin, p. 263.
- ⁶ Clay Blair, Ridgway's Paratroopers, p. 233n.
- ⁷ Gavin, p. 261.
- ⁸ Blair, p. 289.
- ⁹ Napier Crookenden, Drop Zone Normandy, p. 8.
- ¹⁰ Allen L. Langdon, Ready, p. vii.
- ¹¹ Ibid., pp. vii-viii.
- ¹² John Keegan, Six Armies in Normandy, p. 95.
- ¹³ Robert J. Best, The Structure of a Battle: Analysis of a UN-UK Action North of Taeju, Korea, September 1950, p. 195.
- ¹⁴ Clay Blair, The Forgotten War, p. 244, photo.
- ¹⁵ Letter, COL H. W. Mansfield, Chief, Operations and Personnel Research Division, Office of the Chief of Staff, to Commandant, CGSC, 4 Mar 1955, Subj: Technical Memorandum ORO-T-261, "The Structure of a Battle".
- ¹⁶ Best, p. 1.
- ¹⁷ Cash, Albright, Sandstrom, Seven Firefights in Vietnam, p. 192.
- ¹⁸ J. D. Coleman, Pleiku, p. xi. Coleman also wrote Memories of the First Team in Vietnam (1969), a precursor to Pleiku.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., p. ix.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. xv.
- ²¹ Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft, ed., America's First Battles, 1776-1965, p. 300.

²² LTG John J. Tolson, Airmobility, 1961-1971, p. 81.

²³ Tolson, p. 81.

²⁴ LTC David R. Campbell, "Fighting Encircled: A Study in U.S. Army Leadership," pp. 3-4.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 105.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ COL Howard J. Prince, "Leadership in Combat," pp. 6-9.

²⁸ COL T. N. Dupuy, "In Search of an American Philosophy of Command and Control," p. 30.

²⁹ MAJ William G. Butler, "How Should the Brigade and Division Commander Assess Success or Failure on the AirLand Battlefield," pp. 3-6.

³⁰ MAJ Robert W. Mixon, Jr., "Taking the Ultimate Risk: Commanding and Controlling Maneuver Forces in Tactical Deep Operations," p. 10.

³¹ Ibid., p. 36.

³² Ibid., p. 11.

³³ Ibid., pp. 35-37.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

³⁵ MAJ David M. Cowan, "Auftragstaktik: How Low Can You Go?" p. 2.

³⁶ MAJ Leon H. Rios, "Will, Technology, and Tactical Command and Control," p. 5.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 28.

⁴⁰ MAJ John M. Vermillion, "Tactical Implications of the Adoption of Auftragstaktik for Command and Control on the AirLand Battlefield," pp. 36-37.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁴² MAJ Jerry H. Simonsen, CPT Herbert L. Frandsen, and CPT David A. Hoopengardner, "Excellence in the Combat Arms," p. iv.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 46-48.

⁴⁴ Center for Army Lessons Learned, "Fort Hood Leadership Study," pp. 18-22.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 1.

⁴⁶ Dr. David H. Marlowe, "Leadership Training Considerations," p. 1.

CHAPTER THREE

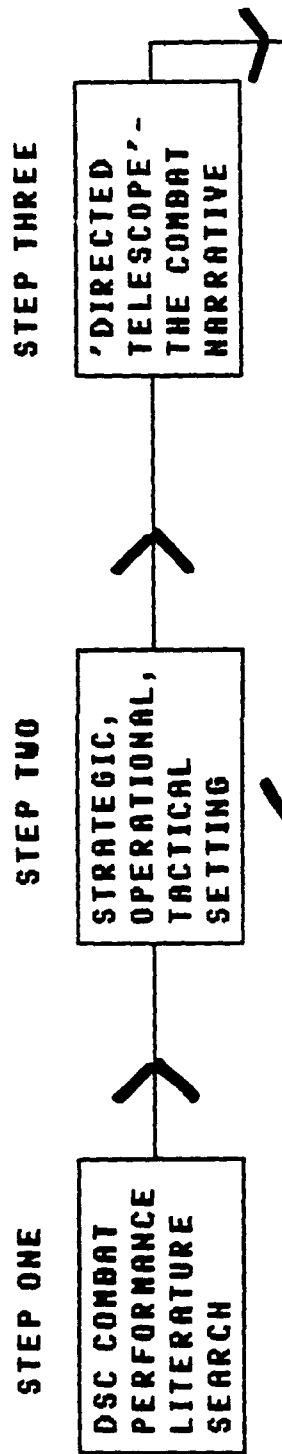
METHODOLOGY

The method used for answering the research question consists of a two-phase operation. (See Diagram One.) The first phase is a literature review of historical sources to develop a picture of each battalion commander in one or two combat situations. In all cases, the DSC-winning performance constituted one combat situation. The procedure for collection of data involved in this phase is composed of a number of steps intended to present each combat situation in much the same way the battalion commander would have perceived it. The first step was to determine the date and location of the DSC-winning performance. Next, background data was collected to place the combat situation in the proper tactical, operational, and strategic perspectives. This was accomplished by a review of Army Historical Series publications and a variety of campaign histories and senior leader (division, corps, and army commanders) accounts. The third step was to apply the "directed telescope"¹ and develop the "vertical slice of combat"² through the use of first-person narratives, combat after-action reports, photos, maps, diagrams, sketches, awards citations, and personal interviews with the battalion commanders. In many instances in this step, when objective data was not available, intent and cause and effect were extrapolated.

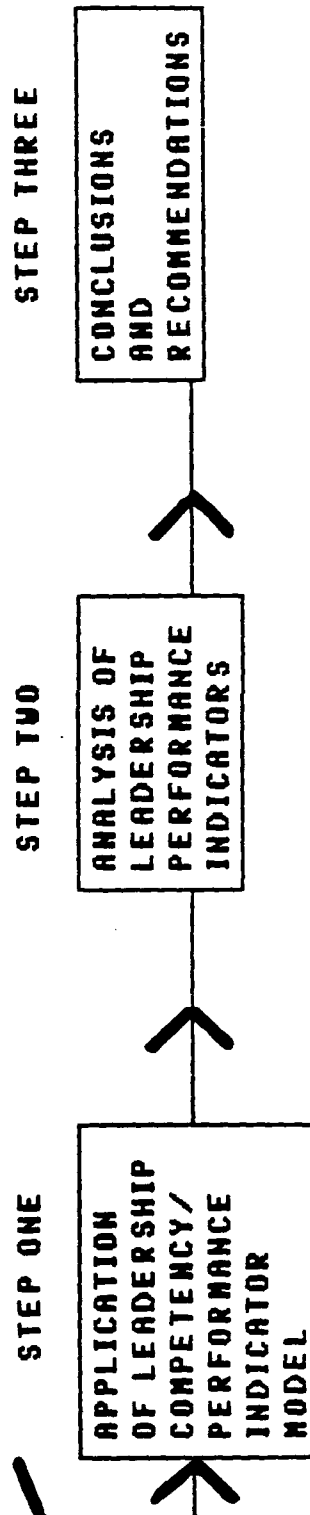
DIAGRAM ONE

METHODOLOGY FLOW PROCESS

PHASE 1: DATA COLLECTION



PHASE 2: APPLICATION OF THE MODEL AND ANALYSIS



Also, as is normally the case when the first-person accounts of participants of small unit actions are involved, seemingly objective facts come into contention and require corroboration. In these occurrences, a reliable factual middle-ground was interpolated.

The second phase of the methodology is the application of the leadership competency/performance indicator model. This model is based on the nine leadership competencies described in FM 22-100, Military Leadership. These competencies were developed by Army Research Institute (ARI) as a standard tool for use in assessing leader performance and development in the field and the school house.³ The competencies were formulated to be:

- a. a doctrinally-determined list of desired skills, knowledge, and attitudes
- b. generic in nature, applicable to all levels of leadership in peace and war
- c. subjective
- d. not totally measurable
- e. flexible, allowing latitude for a leader's personal style, dynamics, and personality.⁴

One of the purposes of this study of battalion commanders in combat is to "test fire" these competencies by applying them in a historical appraisal mode. The leadership competency/performance indicator model applied in this study does not deviate from the approved mechanism

of tasks, supporting skills, knowledge, and attitudes (SKA) and leadership performance indicators (LPI) inherent in the competencies of FM 22-100. These competencies assimilate the four major factors of leadership from FM 22-100 and the eleven time-honored leadership principles into a broad definition of leader behavior. The leader must be competent in these areas to successfully lead his soldiers.⁵ (See Appendix A for descriptions of each competency.)

The nine leadership competencies outlined in FM 22-100 are: (1) Communications; (2) Supervision; (3) Teaching and Counseling; (4) Soldier Team Development; (5) Technical and Tactical Proficiency; (6) Decision Making; (7) Planning; (8) Use of Available Systems; and (9) Professional Ethics (see Diagram Two). However, one column of the model is entitled "other" to allow for the potential identification of a competency which is drawn out in the course of the study.

The nine leadership competencies and their attendant skills, knowledge, and attitudes (SKA) and leadership performance indicators (LPI) "roll-up" the factor and principles of leadership outlined in FM 22-100. The SKA and LPI of each competency actually provide the indepth checklist items for each battalion commander in combat and help drive the conclusions of the study. For the purpose of assessing the combat leadership of LTCs Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore, the leadership

DIAGRAM TWO

LEGEND:

- 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
- 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
- 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
- 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
- 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER COMPETENCY	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COMMUNICATIONS			
SUPERVISION			
TEACHING AND COUNSELING			
SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT			
TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL PROFICIENCY			
DECISION MAKING			
PLANNING			
USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS			
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS			
OTHER			

competency/performance indicator model has been constructed with the SKA as the key analysis categories. Within each of the SKA assessments, the LPI will be used to further describe the combat performance, when warranted. A simple scoring system was devised to show, at a glance, how each battalion commander has demonstrated competency in each of the nine leadership functions.

The following is an outline of each of the competencies with its required tasks and SKA. (See Appendix B for the specific and detailed LPI.)

A. Communication

1. Task - Communicate effectively

a. SKA - Be a good listener

- Clearly communicate your intent
- Communicate nonverbally
- Communicate enthusiasm
- Clearly communicate your orders
- Communicate standards
- Communicate up, down, horizontally
- Obtain feedback
- Stress simplicity

B. Supervise

1. Task - Effectively supervise subordinates

a. SKA - Command forward

- Don't oversupervise
- Enforce safety standards
- Establish controls

- Establish/enforce standards
- Follow-up on corrective action
- Provide feedback

C. Teaching and Counseling

1. Task - Teach and counsel subordinates

a. SKA - Coach/counsel subordinates

- Demand action
- Develop subordinates
- Teach skills
- Train for war
- Use an awards and discipline system

D. Soldier Team Development

1. Task - Develop soldier and leader teams

a. SKA - Accept honest mistakes

- Be responsible to the unit
- Create strong unit identity
- Demonstrate caring
- Demonstrate trust
- Develop cooperation and teamwork
- Develop subordinates to replace you
- All display confidence in self and other team members
- Encourage boldness
- Encourage candor
- Encourage initiative
- Encourage innovation
- Encourage speedy action

- Generate unit cohesion
- Include subordinate leaders in decision making
- Instill desire
- Provide tough, repetitive, exacting training
- Train leader teams

E. Technical and Tactical Competency

1. Task - Be technically and tactically proficient
 - a. SKA - Standards are in accordance with those prescribed by/in field and technical manuals, MOS/MQS guides, ARTEP manuals.¹¹

F. Decision Making

1. Task - Make sound, timely decisions at the lowest practical level
 - a. SKA - Accept prudent risks in subordinates
 - Be assertive
 - Be creative
 - Delegate authority to match responsibility
 - Implement a plan
 - Improvise
 - Include all leaders in decision making
 - Take appropriate action (within commander's intent) in the absence of specific orders

- Take calculated risks
- Take decisive action
- Use and expect good judgement

G. Planning

1. Task - Plan effectively

a. SKA - Adjust according to the situation

- Be adaptable
- Establish clear goals and objectives
- Establish a sense of common purpose for the unit
- Establish courses of actions to meet goals and objectives
- Organize
- Plan beyond initial operations

H. Use of Available Systems

1. Task - Effectively employ management technology

a. SKA - Appropriately filter information to subordinates

- Actively seek needed information
- Manage resources (time, people, info, things)

I. Professional Ethics

1. Task - Exemplify and foster the professional Army ethic

a. SKA - Accept responsibility

- Be a role model
- Be candid

- Be physically fit
- Demonstrate bearing
- Demonstrate compassion
- Demonstrate courage
- Demonstrate integrity
- Demonstrate maturity
- Demonstrate self-discipline
- Develop the professional Army ethic in subordinates
- Demonstrate selflessness

Before this study can proceed, however, something must be done to address the profound absence of SKA and LPI to support the Technical and Tactical Proficiency competency.

Technical and Tactical Proficiency is nothing less than the keystone competency of all of the leadership competencies. FM 22-100 clearly articulates the fact that the leader must know his job, must know how to train his soldiers and maintain and employ his equipment, and must know how to provide combat power to win battles. Without Technical and Tactical Proficiency, all other competencies are invalid. If the leader is not technically and tactically competent, what good is Communication? How could a leader Supervise without knowing his craft? Or how could a leader Teach and Counsel, or Plan, Make Decisions, or Develop Soldier Teams?

The complete lack of SKA and LPI for this competency is a glaring doctrinal deficiency. Without concrete standards for assessing or evaluating a leader's technical and tactical proficiency, there is no performance standard for the most vital ingredient of the way the Army prepares itself for future combat. Without adequate performance standards, how can future battalion commanders readily assess and/or improve themselves - as FM 22-100 stipulates - in Technical and Tactical Proficiency? In a larger sense, how can the tasks, SKA, and LPI of the leadership competencies be used in the field, as they were intended to be used?

More importantly, this major gap in doctrine signals a distinct disconnect between the military leadership doctrine of FM 22-100 and the Army's warfighting doctrine of FM 100-5. This disconnect is significant because it fails to demonstrate the vital linkage between leadership - the most dynamic element of combat power - and the other three operational elements of combat power: maneuver, firepower, and protection. If there are no performance standards for assessing or evaluating a leader's technical and tactical competency in military leadership doctrine, how can there be assessment and evaluation standards for leadership in AirLand Battle doctrine? How are leaders and commanders assessed or evaluated at the National Training Center, the Joint Readiness Training Center, or the Combined Maneuver

Training Center? Could generic SKA and LPI be established for "field" assessment and evaluation of the technical and tactical proficiency of a leader? For a battalion commander?

For the purpose of this study, a set of tasks and SKA were developed, in association with AirLand Battle doctrine, for use in the analysis of the technical and tactical competency of each combat battalion commander:

1. Task: Conduct successful combat operations

a. Skills, Knowledge, Attitudes:

- Apply the tenets of AirLand Battle Doctrine
(agility, initiative, depth, synchronization)
- Implement the AirLand Battle imperatives:

Ensure unity of effort

Anticipate events on the battlefield

Concentrate combat power against enemy
vulnerabilities

Designate, sustain, and shift the main
effort

Press the fight

Move fast, strike hard, and finish rapidly

Use terrain, weather, deception, OPSEC

Conserve strength for decisive action

Combine arms and sister services to
compliment and reinforce

Understand the effects of battle on
soldiers, units, and leaders

- Employ battlefield operating systems

Maneuver

Fire support

Command, control, and communications (C³)

Mobility/countermobility

Combat service support

Air Defense Artillery

Intelligence

Lastly, the five characteristics of successful combat leaders found in LTC K. E. Hamburger's report on combat leadership were "tracked" to determine their potential value as SKA or LPI. LTC Hamburger's study group arrived at five personal characteristics of leader success which were present in every case of success on the battlefield and conspicuously absent during failure.⁷ The characteristics of successful combat leaders, according to the study group, consisted of five personal traits: (1) terrain sense; (2) single-minded tenacity; (3) ferocious audacity; (4) physical confidence; and (5) practical, practiced judgement.⁸ Terrain sense was demonstrated as the intuitive ability to judge the terrain and visualize how the battle would develop and how weapons could best be employed within the given landscape. Single-minded tenacity was seen as the imaginative, driving intensity of the leader to use every asset at his disposal to accomplish the mission. Ferocious audacity was viewed as a proclivity toward taking enormous but

well-reasoned risks which bordered on inspired desperation. This audacity was fueled by the leader's self-confidence and his belief in his mission. Physical confidence was demonstrated by regular physical activity by leaders which contributed not only to physical well-being and self-image but also to the perception, by subordinates, that the leader exuded the image of success. Lastly, practiced, practical judgement is best described as common sense. Successful combat leaders were seen as those capable of rapidly sifting through large quantities of often conflicting data to arrive at "the bottom line".⁹ These five personal characteristics were assimilated into the analysis of each of the battalion commanders and assessed in the "other" category of the competency matrix (see Diagram Two).

Using the methodology outlined in this chapter, the combat leadership performance of the selected World War II, Korea, and Vietnam battalion commanders will be narrated and assessed in separate chapters. First, Chapter 4 will analyze the combat battalion command of LTC Benjamin Vandervoort at St. Mere-Eglise on 6-7 June 1944. Next, the Korean war combat leadership of LTC James H. Lynch will be examined in Chapter 5. To round-out the study, the combat performance of LTC Harold G. Moore in Vietnam in 1965 will be assessed in Chapter 6. Finally, Chapter 7 will address conclusions and recommendations concerning the skills of command of battalions in combat,

and how Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore successfully exercised leadership at the forward edge of combat power.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Martin Van Crevald, Command in War, p.
- ² Robert J. Best, The Structure of a Battle, p. 7.
- ³ Fact Sheet dtd 12 July 1989, Subj: Warfighting Leadership Performance Indicators (LPI), Enclosure 2 to FM 22-100, Military Leadership (AFD).
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ FM 22-100, Military Leadership, p. A-1.
- ⁶ Fact Sheet, 15 pages (unpaginated).
- ⁷ Hamburger, p. 1.
- ⁸ Ibid., p. 2.
- ⁹ Ibid., p. 1.

CHAPTER 4

LTC BENJAMIN VANDERVOORT, 6-7 JUNE 1944

The fundamental concept of General Omar Bradley's plan for the use of airborne forces in the invasion of France was beachhead security. To insure the success of the American landings at Utah Beach, he needed his airborne divisions to seal off the Cotentin Peninsula from German reinforcement. His plan was to drop the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions astride the Douve River, a natural obstacle at the neck of the peninsula. The paratroopers were to put a stranglehold on the huge peninsula, severing likely avenues of approach into the beachhead and disrupting lines of communications between Cherbourg and Carentan.¹ Airborne forces would land five hours before amphibious assault forces attacked.

General Bradley's plan called for the 101st Airborne Division to land by parachute and glider behind Utah Beach. Major General Maxwell D. Taylor's Screaming Eagles were then to capture the town of St. Mere-Eglise, attack enemy coastal defenses from the rear, seize crossing sites over the Merderet River, and seize and secure four vital causeways that spanned over the large flooded areas directly west of Utah Beach.² The seaborne force landing at Utah Beach had to have secure passage over the causeways in order to carry out its operational mission of pushing inside the Cotentin

Peninsula and capturing the port of Cherbourg from the rear.³

General Bradley's intent in the deployment of the 82d Airborne Division was oriented on destruction of the enemy forces just inside the neck of the peninsula. A three-regiment task force, led by Brigadier General James M. Gavin, Assistant Division Commander of the 82d Airborne, would drop twenty miles west of Utah Beach near St. Sauveur-le-Vicomte. BG Gavin's Task Force A would conduct a vertical envelopment of German forces around St. Saveur-le-Vicomte to cut off the closest potential enemy reinforcements against the Utah Beach landings. Gavin's task force had the toughest mission, and he would have to hold out until the Utah Beach forces moved inland over the Screaming Eagle causeways.

On 26 May 1944, the missions for both airborne divisions changed. Intelligence reports indicated that the 91st German Infantry Division had arrived in the Cotentin Peninsula to join the 243rd Attack Division and the 709th Coastal Division.⁴ Airborne planners now realized that a fresh enemy division was positioned between the drop zones of the 101st and 82d Airborne Divisions. With only ten days remaining before D-Day, the airborne planners not only feared that the parachute missions had been compromised, but now had to make sweeping changes in a plan that had been rehearsed and studied for nearly six full months.⁵

On 26 May 1944, General Bradley informed Generals Ridgway and Taylor that the scheme for the airborne assault had been changed. Bradley wanted to avoid the possibility of having the airborne units defeated in detail by a strong German division positioned between the two objective areas. The 91st German Infantry Division could conceivably strike either force immediately after their parachute assaults, when the units were most vulnerable. A failed airborne assault would clearly jeopardize the success of the Utah Beach landings. Consequently, General Bradley announced to his airborne commanders that both divisions would be dropped side-by-side behind Utah Beach.⁶

This momentous eleventh-hour change caused very little shift in the 101st Airborne Division plan, but the mission and location of the 82d Airborne Division was radically altered. The new plan called for the 101st Airborne Division to conduct parachute assaults into DZs A, B, C and glider assaults into LZ E. All landing zones were moved a few hundred meters closer to Utah Beach.⁷ The 82d Airborne Division would now land on both sides of the Merderet River, assume the 101st mission of capturing St. Mere-Eglise, establish defensive positions along the Douve River, facing south, and would be prepared to attack west to complete the stranglehold on the neck of the Cotentin Peninsula.⁸

BG Gavin would still lead the three assault regiments of the 82d into the new objective area, now 20 miles east of the original site. Though positioned snugly up against the 101st, the objective area straddled the narrow, unfordable, and deeply swamped Merderet River. Two drop zones were situated on the west side of the river - DZs N and T - and Drop Zone O and Landing Zone W were on the east bank of the river and closest to the 101st and Utah Beach.⁹ The 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment was slated for DZ T. Both units would establish defensive positions and get ready to attack westward to seal off the Cotentin Peninsula.¹⁰

The veteran 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment - previously led by Jim Gavin into the combat jumps at Sicily and Salerno and now commanded by COL William Ekman - was to jump into DZ O and accomplish four key missions. First, Ekman's troopers would capture the stone bridges which spanned the Mederet River at La Fiere and Chef-du-Pont. These two bridges were to be seized intact in order to facilitate contact between the division drop zones on both sides of the river. Second, 505 would establish a blocking line north and northeast of St. Mere-Eglise at the towns of Neuville-au-Plain and Benzeville-au-Plain. Third, the regiment would link-up eastward with the 101st Airborne Division which would be concentrated between Utah Beach and St. Mere-Eglise. Last, and most important, Ekman's regiment would assume

the 101st mission of taking the town of St. Mere-Eglise.¹¹

St. Mere-Eglise was the cornerstone of the entire 82d Airborne Division mission.¹² Situated strategically on the major north-south artery between Carentan and Cherbourg, St. Mere-Eglise was an extremely important communications center at the neck of the Cotentin Peninsula. Telephone trunk cables which connected Cherbourg with Carentan and with the coastal towns ran through St. Mere-Eglise. St. Mere-Eglise was also the hub of a highway net of metal-surface roads which connected with all parts of the peninsula.¹³ The town itself was compact, and its houses were strongly built and surrounded with stout stone walls. Sited on ground which rose perceptibly above the hedgerows beyond the town, St. Mere-Eglise dominated the approaching roads which converged into it.¹⁴

The importance of St. Mere-Eglise was not lost on the German commanders. As early as March 1944, Hitler began directing forces into the Cotentin Peninsula even though he believed the seaborne assault would strike at Pas de Calais.¹⁵ By the end of May, the proposed objective sites of the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions were reinforced by a mixed bag of German forces which had the specific mission of destroying airborne landings.¹⁶ South of Carentan lay the full-strength 6th Parachute Regiment. Six miles north of Utah Beach was the 919th

Grenadier Regiment, part of the 709th Coastal Division. The 919th Grenadiers had a battalion strongpoint at Foucarville, twelve companies covering Utah Beach, and an anti-aircraft battery and the regimental supply troops located at St. Mere-Eglise. The 795th Ost Battalion was in a strongpoint on the high ground at Turqueville and Ecoqueneauville, a few miles southeast of St. Mere-Eglise. The 1057th and 1058th Infantry Regiments of the 91st Attack Division were situated in the vicinity of DZs N and T. The 100th Panzer Battalion, equipped with Russian and French light tanks but considered only slightly combat effective, was in positions three miles west of St. Mere-Eglise.¹⁶

The 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment plan assigned only one battalion to capture St. Mere-Eglise - the 3d Battalion, 505th, commanded by the flamboyant, abrasive LTC Ed Krause.¹⁷ 3/505 would drop on DZ O, assemble close to St. Mere-Eglise, attack and capture the town, then mop-up and establish roadblocks to the east and south to repel counterattacks.¹⁸

The 1st Battalion, 505, commanded by MAJ Fred Kellam, would conduct a parachute assault into DZ O, assemble, proceed west immediately and seize the stone bridges over the Merderet at La Fiere and Chef-du-Pont. 1/505 would hold these crucial connecting links to the 507th and 508th Parachute Infantry Regiments to the east, and would defeat enemy counterattacks toward St.

Mere-Eglise from the west and southwest.¹⁹ Kellam had assumed command of 1/505 in England after LTC Walter Winton injured a knee while playing football with the troopers.²⁰

The mission of LTC Benjamin Vandervoort's 2d Battalion, 505th, was to secure the northern flank of the VII Corps seaborne assault area by occupying a defensive line running from Neuville-au-Plain eastward to Bandienville. Vandervoort's position would link with the 101st Airborne Division's 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment which would extend southwest from Foucarville. Vandervoort would orient on rising ground bracketed by two meandering eastern forks of the Merderet River. His battalion would patrol to the west from Neuville-au-Plain and defend St. Mere-Eglise from potential enemy threats coming in from the north along the Carentan-Cherbourg highway.²¹

Ben Vandervoort was no stranger to the 82d Airborne Division or the 2/505. He commanded a company and was 505th Regiment S-3 for Gavin in Sicily. He assumed command of 2/505 when LTC Mark Alexander was promoted to 505 XO after Gavin's elevation to Assistant Division Commander in October 1943.²² Quiet and soft-spoken, Vandervoort was a tough trainer and disciplinarian.²³

At approximately 2320 hours, 5 June 1944, the lead serials of the 82d Airborne Division's Task Force A were enroute to Normandy. Leading the division serial were the

seventy-one aircraft of the 316th Air Group which carried LTC Krause's 3/505 and LTC Vandervoort's 2/505. At 15 minutes past midnight, the first pathfinders landed to set up Eureka beacon lights to mark the drop zones for the approaching air armada. Fortunately for the inbound paratroopers, the German forces inside the objective areas had not received the message to go to Alarmstufe II, as had all other units in France, when German radio intelligence operators intercepted the invasion alert transmission intended for the French Resistance. In the peninsula the evening of 5 June had been no more alarming than any other night in occupied France. Normal night guards and sentries were posted but no instructions for heightened anti-airborne measures were disseminated.²⁴

The 505th serial followed the same "back door" route to the Cotentin Peninsula as had the pathfinders and the 101st aircraft. The 505 aircraft were closely packed and had clear flying as they reached the western shore of the peninsula. Provided visibility remained clear, DZ O would be easily spotted. Bounded on the leading, or western, edge by the Mederet River, on the trailing, or eastern, edge by the Carentan-Cherbourg highway and by a country lane to the south, DZ O consisted of oval fields and hedges one mile long and one-half mile wide. Bright moonlight would enable each aircraft jumpmaster, situated in the jump door, to clearly identify the landmarks on the ground and sight the Eureka beacon marking the DZ.²⁵

As the formation headed inland, it encountered heavy, turbulent cloud banks. The danger of collision between aircraft was great. Many aircraft ascended to 1500 feet above ground level (AGL) to maintain a safe course. Inside the aircraft the jumpmasters had their sticks standing and hooked up, a lesson learned in Italy regarding a fast exit if the aircraft was hit by flak.²⁶ Despite the fact that the aircraft of the pathfinders and the 101st had already alerted German anti-aircraft crews, the dense clouds concealed the approach of the 505th serial and flak was subsequently light and erratic.²⁷

Jumpmaster in the lead aircraft of the regimental serial was LTC Vandervoort, 2/505 commander. Vandervoort had the jump door opened as soon as the serial reached the coast of France and now, standing in the door, he could recognize the key terrain features along the flight route.²⁸ Having just cleared the cloud bank, Vandervoort's aircraft was still flying too high and too fast for drop conditions when the pilot mistook the Douve River for the Mederet River and switched on the green light for "GO!" Vandervoort reacted quickly, yet calmly. Checking the terrain, he realized the error and directed the pilot to turn off the jump light.²⁹ As jumpmaster in the lead aircraft of the formation, Vandervoort was responsible for pinpointing DZ O and initiating the mass parachute drop. Once the lead jumpmaster exits the

aircraft, a green DZ confirmation flash is signalled from the astro-dome of the lead aircraft to all subsequent ships.³⁰ Had Vandervoort exited on the pilot's pre-mature signal, the entire regiment could have been deposited ten to twenty miles west of DZ O, on virtually the same objective sites as the original assault plan. An errant drop of this magnitude could have caused a monumental shift in the conduct of the mission to secure the Utah Beach landings.

A few minutes further on in the flight route Vandervoort spotted the beacon lights of DZ O, arranged in a "T". He ordered the pilot to descend to the drop altitude of 600 feet and reduce the aircraft speed to 120 knots required for a safe exit. About the same time Vandervoort spotted the Merderet River, the leading edge of the drop zone. Once more the pilot switched on the green light, but was still flying too high and too fast for jump conditions.³¹ At about 0200 hours, Vandervoort led his stick out of the aircraft.³²

Vandervoort's stick was followed by 117 sticks of the 505th Regiment, totalling 2090 men. All sticks exited high and fast. "The opening shock popped lights in the back of your eyeballs and tore off musette bags, field glasses, and anything else that wasn't tied down securely," Vandervoort remembered.³³ As he landed, Vandervoort broke his left leg "one inch or so above the ankle."³⁴ In pain, he watched the remainder of his

battalion jump. "They were well spread out," he recalled, due to the speed and altitude of the aircraft.³⁵ In spite of the fact that some of his paratroopers fell into the marshy areas of the Merderet River and into St. Mere-Eglise, the 505th Regimental drop had been, according to Vandervoort, the division's best combat jump. "We were right on the button. It was a great delivery."³⁶

The 505th drop had indeed been a great one. Thirty-one of the 118 sticks in the regiment landed on or within a few hundred meters of DZ O. Twenty-nine sticks landed within two miles. This drop pattern enabled over 1000 men of the 505th to assemble.³⁷ By first light on D-Day, Ekman's 505th was the only regiment functioning as a three battalion force, with all of its battalion commanders in place.³⁸ This was crucial to the successful accomplishment of the 505th mission, because airborne combat is small unit fighting at battalion level.

The fight for St. Mere-Eglise was a battalion commander's fight. Its capture ensured the success of the Utah Beach landings, just as General Bradley had planned. The fight for St. Mere-Eglise was LTC Benjamin Vandervoort's fight.³⁹

LTC Ben Vandervoort was more than equal to the task. Serious by nature, Vandervoort had never been awarded a popular nickname by his men, as had "Jumpin' Jim" Gavin. He ran a tight battalion of paratroop veterans who had made two tough combat jumps and slugged

it out against some of the best units the German had to offer. He had not developed the close, easy-going relationship with his battalion that was characteristic of other commanders in the regiment. Normandy was his first combat operation as a battalion commander. He very much wanted the approval of the men whom he led out of the aircraft above DZ O. His conduct as a leader and commander in Normandy would earn him the respect and admiration of superiors and subordinates alike. He would fight his battalion for forty days on his broken ankle. Such an exhibition of leadership would make him, as MG Ridgway recalled, "one of the bravest, toughest battle commanders I ever knew."⁴⁰

Just after 0400 on D-Day, LTC Vandervoort made the decision to begin his movement from DZ O to capture Neuville-au-Plain and establish his defensive line to the north. Vandervoort felt he had sufficient force assembled after the jump to accomplish his mission. All of the battalion (less two platoons from E Company, which had been misdropped) had closed into the planned assembly area on the north side of DZ O. This most rapid and complete assembly of 2/505 was greatly aided by Vandervoort, who began firing green flares approximately fifteen minutes after he landed. Vandervoort continued to fire these flares at specific intervals as a guide for his troopers as they "rolled up their sticks," and recovered bundles and equipment while moving toward the battalion assembly

area.⁴¹ In the meantime, the 2/505 S-2, LT Eugene A. Doerfler, confirmed the assembly area location and march orientation for the move to Neuville-au-Plain by checking with a nearby resident.⁴² Of all the airborne units dropped into Normandy on the night of 5-6 June, no other battalion-size unit had assembled as quickly and completely.⁴³ This no doubt occurred because the 316th wing dropped the 2/505 segment of the 505 serial right on target and the fact that Vandervoort's exacting and hard-driving training of the battalion in England had paid off.⁴⁴

Shortly after 0400, as Vandervoort was ready to issue the order to move out to Neuville-au-Plain, MG Ridgway appeared at the 2/505 CP.⁴⁵ Ridgway had jumped from the last aircraft of the 505 serial bound for DZ 0 and was making his way off the drop zone toward his division command post, which was to be established just a few hundred meters northwest of 2/505. Ridgway's arrival occurred shortly after Vandervoort's left ankle had been examined by the 2/505 battalion surgeon, CPT Putnam. Putnam recalled that Vandervoort was sitting under a poncho, reading his map by flashlight. Vandervoort recognized his surgeon, and quietly asked him to examine his left ankle by removing his left boot with as little demonstration as possible.⁴⁶ Putnam told Vandervoort that his left ankle was definitely broken, but Vandervoort insisted that the surgeon replace his jump boot and lace

it up as tight as possible. Vandervoort then decided his rifle would make an appropriate crutch.⁴⁷

Ridgway and Vandervoort talked briefly over Vandervoort's map. The division commander then continued on toward the planned location of his CP, just a few hundred meters northwest of the 2/505 assembly area.⁴⁸ There is little evidence to suggest that the two leaders discussed anything more than a map orientation with the ground and the status of Vandervoort's battalion. If anything, Vandervoort may have articulated his move-out schedule and may have reported to Ridgway that while his radios worked, he had not yet had communications with 3/505, 1/505, BG Gavin, or COL Ekman, the regimental commander. It is also conceivable that he assured the division commander that he was capable of accomplishing his mission at Neuville-au-Plain given the status of his battalion.

Ridgway apparently arrived at his CP group a short time after leaving the 2/505 assembly area as Vandervoort next received a radio transmission from Ridgway ordering him to stand fast until the status of the 505 Regiment - and the 82d Airborne Division as a whole - was better known.⁴⁹ Ridgway still had not heard from any of his assault echelon battalions and he sensed that the divisions had been wildly misdropped, a repetition of the Sicily experience.⁵⁰ Vandervoort postponed his move-out

order, and the battalion resumed work to recover weapons bundles and confirm personnel accountability.

In about two hours (about 0545, just after first light), Vandervoort got the "go ahead" order from Ridgway to move toward Neuville-au-Plain. At some point between the time Vandervoort had been ordered to remain at DZ 0 and this updated directive, a runner from 3/505 happened upon Ridgway's CP and delivered a message that was actually intended for the 505 commander, COL Ekman. The message stated that 3d Battalion had occupied St. Mere-Eglise at around 0500.⁵¹ Ridgway now had no need to use Vandervoort in case 3d Battalion did not seize St. Mere-Eglise. St. Mere-Eglise was foremost in Ridgway's mind because he knew that a solid base had to be established in the town, so vital to the security of the whole VII Corps front.⁵²

Now that he had clearance to proceed on to his D-Day mission, Vandervoort had to solve a more personal and immediate command and control problem: unless he discovered some means of being transported, hopping along at the head of his battalion column on its one and one half mile cross-country "dash" to Neuville-au-Plain would not be conducive to rapid battlefield accomplishment. Not a small man, Vandervoort would be an overwhelming burden to any paratrooper brave enough to attempt to carry him. Vandervoort's problem was solved when he spotted two misdropped sergeants of the 101st Airborne Division in the

2/505 Battalion column, pulling a collapsible ammunition cart. Vandervoort was able to persuade the two NCOs to give him a lift in spite of their remarks about "not having come all the way to Normandy to pull any damn colonel around."⁵³ Now posed aboard the cart like an eighteenth century Spanish general, endowed with a lion heart," Vandervoort quietly gave the order to move out to Neuville-au-Plain.⁵⁴

Around 0615 Vandervoort and his battalion were on the outskirts of Neuville-au-Plain when COL Ekman, the regimental commander, and MAJ Norton, the 505 S-3 met the column. Both had been misdropped well off DZ 0. Ekman ordered Vandervoort to halt short of Neuville-au-Plain until the regimental situation was sorted out.⁵⁵ Ekman had run into MAJ Kellam who reported 1/505 had been badly misdropped 1000 meters north of DZ 0. But there had been no reports from Krause and St. Mere-Eglise. As a result, it appeared that the two key division objectives - the bridges at La Fiere and Chef-du-Pont, assigned to 1/505, and the town of St. Mere-Eglise, the mission of 3/505 - were far from being accomplished. Vandervoort and his battalion was the only force in the regiment capable of achieving its proposed objectives. With this situation facing him, Ekman left Vandervoort and hurried south toward the proposed site of the regimental CP, hoping to get more information on 3/505 and St. Mere-Eglise.⁵⁶

At his CP, Ekman took charge of his regiment. Worried about the capture of St. Mere-Eglise, Ekman tried to reach Krause by radio. Unable to communicate with Krause, and unaware that Ridgway had received two messages from Krause, intended for Ekman, which announced the capture of St. Mere-Eglise at 0500, Ekman could only assume that Krause was probably in big trouble.⁵⁷ At 0800 he radioed to Vandervoort that he had heard nothing from 3d Battalion.⁵⁸ At best, this message may be considered as a warning order, for at 0810 Ekman directed Vandervoort to turn south and capture St. Mere-Eglise.⁵⁹

Vandervoort now was subjected to a classic order - counter-order - disorder episodes endemic to a fluid battlefield.⁶⁰ In the seven minutes that passed after the receipt of Ekman's 0810 transmission to capture St. Mere-Eglise, Vandervoort was ordered at 0816 to continue on to Neuville and then at 0817 this directive was countermanded and 2/505 was charged to move on to St. Mere-Eglise.⁶¹

Vandervoort's judicious response to this flurry of contradictory instructions resulted in one of the best tactical decisions of the war.⁶² Vandervoort instinctively felt that Ekman's orders neglected to take the original 2/505 mission into full account and without a blocking force on the rising ground at Neuville, St. Mere-Eglise would remain vulnerable to German counterattack from the north. On his own initiative then,

Vandervoort detached a 41-man platoon from D Company under the command of LT Turner B. Turnball and told Turnball to do his best to carry out the original battalion mission. Turnball would first clean out the small group of Germans believed to be located in the outlying houses of the hamlet. Next, he would mine Highway Nationale 13 north of Neuville at the intersection of the main highway and the Houbec-Le Brot road which ran east to west. With this accomplished, Turnball would establish his combat outpost line on the most favorable high ground overlooking his obstacles, taking advantage of the buildings and hedgerows for cover and concealment. If Turnball's platoon was hit with a larger force than it could handle, it was to hold as long as it could, cause the Germans to conduct an expensive flanking enterprise, then fall back to St. Mere-Eglise and link-up with the rest of the battalion. With these instructions to Turnball, Vandervoort reversed his column and headed south for St. Mere-Eglise.⁶³

Turnball wasted no time in implementing his battalion commander's directive. Known as "Chief" in the battalion in reference to his Cherokee Indian ancestry, and much respected as a solid soldier, Turnball led to his paratroopers toward Neuville at a jog-trot. Turnball found Neuville clear of Germans, so he quickly moved to establishing his defense. Neuville was nothing more than a hamlet, with its east-west axis short enough to be covered by the platoon. West of Neuville was an orchard

bounded by open fields. In the east, at right angles to Highway 13, was one of the high-banked hedgerows indicative of the Norman field system. To the north, the ground rose enough to meet Turnbull's requirement to find "high ground" - he would have 600 meters of observation and fields of fire from this locale. Turnbull positioned a squad of ten men with a machinegun next to the orchard, its flank resting on a manure pile. An outpost was placed in a group of barns 200 meters beyond the orchard. Two squads were placed in the east along the hedgerow to take advantage of the fields of fire across the most likely German avenue of approach. A bazooka team was placed about 40 meters to the rear of the platoon, in the shadows of some of the houses of Neuville, where they had good cover and an excellent shot straight north "down" the highway.⁶⁴ Turnbull was content with his dispositions, set to defend by 1000.

Back at St. Mere-Eglise, it turned out that Ekman's precautionary movement of Vandervoort to the town was a correct decision. At about 0930 Krause's position had been heavily counterattacked from the south by two companies of the 795th Georgian Battalion. Supported by three light tanks, two self-propelled guns and mortars firing from Hill 20, the Germans came up on each side of the main road.⁶⁵ The approach of this force was tipped-off by an intense concentration of machinegun and mortar fire directed against Krause's southernmost

roadblock outside the town. Krause immediately went to the southern roadblock, assessed the situation, and then shifted the bulk of Companies G and I from the center of town to the southern outskirts. About this time Krause was hit in the lower leg by a shell fragment, his first wound of the day. 3/505 slowed this attack, but the Germans maintained pressure on the roadblock.⁶⁶

Vandervoort arrived at St. Mere-Eglise via ammunition cart shortly after 3/505 had fought off the first German counterattack. Vandervoort and Krause conferred about the situation and the need for a strong defense of St. Mere-Eglise. Vandervoort remarked to Krause that the simplest plan would be one which Krause outlined his needs and then communicated his instructions directly to Vandervoort's company commanders. As far as Vandervoort was concerned, St. Mere-Eglise was Krause's town, his mission. Krause would call the shots.⁶⁷ With this command arrangement settled, 2/505 units were directed to man the northern and eastern sections of town. While the addition of Vandervoort's men was still not enough to form a 360° perimeter around the town, both commanders felt that by keeping E and I Companies, 3/505 as a reserve in the center of town, they could quickly shift combat power to any threatened sector.⁶⁸

By 1130, the German counterattack from Hill 20 had completely stalled, in spite of the attempt by the Germans to herd cattle toward the roadblock to detonate Krause's

mines.⁶⁹ But there was no diminishing of indirect fire from Hill 20 and Krause was convinced he was being shelled by two German artillery batteries. Krause ordered I Company to attack Hill 20 and remove the indirect fire threat. CPT Harold Swingler was directed to seize Hill 20 by assaulting it from the western flank. After about two hours of inconsequential maneuvering, I Company walked into an ambush that the repulsed Georgian battalion had laid for them. In the ensuing firefight, CPT Swingler and seven other troopers were killed. I Company then retraced its steps to St. Mere-Eglise to reorganize. By this time the 2/505 mortar platoon was set up and, while the platoon leader observed the mortar fire from the church tower, the 81mm gunners fired 35 of the 1000 rounds they would fire on 6 June right on top of Hill 20.⁷⁰ Although the I Company assault was inconclusive, this attack and LT Wilson's mortar fires apparently convinced the commander of the 395th Georgian battalion that an overwhelming force of Americans held St. Mere-Eglise and a withdrawal was necessary. Now the pressure was off Krause's southernmost roadblocks, and he could breathe easier.

In the meantime, Vandervoort had been busy upgrading his mobility and firepower. Somehow, Vandervoort managed to receive one jeep and two 57mm anti-tank guns, complete with crews, from the 80th Antiaircraft Battalion, which had landed by glider on DZ 0 after the last paratroop serial. He placed one of these

guns at the northern end of St. Mere-Eglise to overwatch the roadblock there. After consulting with his ad hoc XO, MAJ Maness, from 1/505, and ensuring that 2/505 defensive positions were set and the CP was operational, Vandervoort took the other 57mm gun and its crew and headed north to check on Turnball at Neuville-au-Plain.⁷²

It was nearly 1300 when Vandervoort reached Neuville-au-Plain with his recently acquired firepower. When he arrived at Turnball's position on the northern fringe of the hamlet, Vandervoort had the antiaircraft gun positioned near a low building on the east side of the highway. As the gun crew man-handled the 6-pounder near the building, Turnball met with Vandervoort and began to brief him on the platoon's dispositions. While they were talking, a "mysterious" Frenchman rode up to the pair and announced (in English) that some American paratroopers were moving south along the highway with a large "bag" of German prisoners. Vandervoort and Turnball looked to the north and spotted a column of troops, marching in good order down the middle of the highway. There appeared to be paratroopers on each side of the formation, waving orange flags. There was nothing extraordinary about this until Vandervoort noticed two tracked vehicles travelling behind the column. The column was 800 meters from Turnball's position when Vandervoort, now suspicious of a German ruse, ordered Turnball to have his machine gunner

fire a short burst to the right side of the approaching formation.⁷³

The fire from Turnbull's machine gunner uncovered the German ruse. "Prisoners" and "guards" both dove for the ditches and returned fire. The two self-propelled guns ignited smoke canisters, threw them forward, and then began to move behind the smoke screen.⁷⁴ Vandervoort and Turnbull had forced the deployment of an advance guard of the German 243d Division's 922d Regiment which was rumbling south out of Montbourg to recapture St. Mere-Eglise. As he kicked over this beehive, Vandervoort discovered that the greatest threat to St. Mere-Eglise was developing in the north, not the south, as had been the prediction.⁷⁵

Turnball's platoon instantly opened fire. The two Browning Automatic Rifles and the .30mm machinegun were initially effective in pinning the 191-man German force to the ground. But the two self-propelled guns continued to press forward and opened fire when they were within 500 meters of Neuville-au-Plain. One of the first rounds took out Turnbull's bazooka team, situated behind the roadblock. Another round narrowly missed the 57mm gun, causing the crew to seek cover in a nearby house. Vandervoort extricated the crew from the house with some "encouragement" and the gunners soon disabled both German guns through fast and accurate shooting.⁷⁶ While the work of the antiaircraft gunners ended the threat to

Turnball's front, platoon-size groups of Germans moved back out of range and began to maneuver against both of his flanks. Vandervoort, watching this action from the roadside, was anxious to know if Turnball was capable of handling this development. He sent a runner to Turnball to ask how he was doing and if he needed help. Turnball sent the runner back with the message "Ok, everything under control, don't worry about me."⁷⁷ Still concerned about Turnball being outflanked and overwhelmed, Vandervoort instructed Turnball to continue to hold on as long as possible while he returned to St. Mere-Eglise to organize a force to cover Turnball's withdrawal.⁷⁸ The fight at Neuville-au-Plain now settled down into an infantry small unit engagement.

Upon his return to his CP at St. Mere-Eglise, Vandervoort directed his E Company Commander, CPT Russell, to immediately send the battalion's reserve north to Neuville to cover the withdrawal of Turnball. The 2/505 reserve consisted of the one and only platoon from E Company, the 1st Platoon, led by LT Theodore L. Petersen.⁷⁹ Petersen was briefed that he was going up against a German company of about 180 men and there was a very distinct possibility that Turnball had already been overrun. Armed with this information, Petersen quickly moved out.⁸⁰

Meanwhile, Turnball's infantry fight was beginning to turn sour. Outnumbered and outgunned, "the Chief" was

rapidly losing the advantage of his position in the hedgerows as the Germans methodically worked around his flanks and into his rear. The vigilant, resolute Turnball did not make it easy for the Germans to flank him. But by mid-afternoon his position was close to collapse. Nine of his troopers were killed and eleven were badly wounded. Turnball's 23 remaining riflemen, now subject to a steady stream of mortar fire, could easily see that the left and right jaws of the pincers were only two hundred meters apart, threatening to cut off Turnball from St. Mere-Eglise. Turnball had to decide whether to charge the center of the attacking force, or withdraw.⁸¹

Petersen's platoon was close at hand, though. Moving from St. Mere-Eglise, Petersen had kept his platoon off to the left of the highway to take advantage of as much of the cover as possible. The platoon reached Turnball's position at about 1600, just in time to flank the right arm of the German pincers moving against Turnball. Petersen then concentrated his fire against a German machinegun emplacement that was responsible for many of Turnball's losses. This flurry of gunfire covered Turnball's withdrawal. Sending a runner to Petersen to announce his withdrawal, Turnball and his remaining sixteen effectives backed out of Neuville. Petersen maintained his high volume of fire until he was sure the survivors were safe, then executed a neat, textbook withdrawal by tactical bounds.⁸²

Clearly, Turnball had accomplished much more in his stand at Neuville than Vandervoort had anticipated. In fact, Vandervoort had fired a signal flare much earlier in the afternoon for Turnball to conduct his withdrawal to St. Mere-Eglise.⁸³ Outnumbered four to one, holding out for eight hours under intense mortar attacks, Turnball had saved St. Mere-Eglise from a simultaneous attack from the north by the 922 Regiment when the 795th Georgian Battalion was counterattacking from the south. Vandervoort had made the enlightened decision to position "the Chief" at Neuville to give St. Mere-Eglise some breathing space, but it was Turnball, at the cost of over half of his platoon, that executed that decision. Killed on 7 June, Turnball would never realize his heroic stand at Neuville helped save the invasion.⁸⁴

With Turnball's survivors and Petersen's platoon safely back inside St. Mere-Eglise, the northern approach to the town was wide open. Intermittent artillery fire and dulsatory sniper fire maintained an even, but low, pressure on the northern sector of St. Mere-Eglise. On the southern edge of town the situation was different. In the late afternoon (prior to Turnball's return to St. Mere-Eglise), Krause's southern roadblock defeated a tentatively launched limited attack by the Georgian Battalion. Then, just before dark, a column of German ammo trucks came barrelling up the highway, exploding in great sheets of flame when they hit Krause's landmines.

Next, the German artillery batteries and mortars on the Turqueville-Fauville ridge began to plaster the 3/505 positions, and the fire continued after dark. At 1700, Krause was hit in the left calf by a sniper bullet, his third wound of the day. Turning his command over to his XO, MAJ Hagan, Krause checked himself into the combined battalion aid station in a little red schoolhouse in the northern part of town.⁸⁵ Krause was deeply depressed, no doubt by the psychological impact of being wounded three times, in steadily increasing severity. Convinced that his mission was doomed to failure, Krause stayed overnight in the aid station.⁸⁶ The next day, though, he resumed command of 3/505.⁸⁷

In contrast to Krause, Vandervoort was a mountain of calm optimism.⁸⁸ Just before dark the northern roadblocks reported that a strong German force, supported by several armored vehicles, was posturing for an attack. Vandervoort turned to the Navy Lieutenant in charge of the USN Shore Fire Control Party which had jumped with 2/505 and asked for naval gunfire on the enemy column. While the Navy Lieutenant worked to contact the battleship USS NEVADA, sitting twelve miles off shore, the Germans kicked off their attack. Vandervoort's troopers held their positions, raking the approaching column with small arms fire. Vandervoort was in the midst of this onslaught by the German 1058 Regiment, maneuvering around St. Mere-Eglise, with difficulty, on his broken ankle.⁸⁹

Just before dark the 82d Airborne Division reinforcement unit gliders made their approach toward their designated landing zone on LZ N. Since the 795 Georgian Battalion was in control of the intended LZ, pathfinders scrambled to divert the incoming serials by emplacing panels, lights, and smoke cannisters on DZ O, a more secure LZ. Most pilots failed to spot the pathfinder signals and the gliders were released right over the top of the 1058 Regiment, near Neuville. Immediately the Germans peppered the gliders with antiaircraft and small arms fire, forcing the glider pilots to seek the first available landing field. Every landing appeared to end in a crash. One glider narrowly missed the combined aid station in St. Mere-Eglise. Vandervoort directed his reserve platoon, Petersen's 1st Platoon, to move out and begin the task of rescuing the glider troops and their precious cargo. Petersen augmented his platoon with 30 or 35 strays from the 101st who had attached themselves to 2/505. Petersen's men quickly recovered sorely needed ammunition and medical supplies and delivered injured glidermen to the aid station.⁹⁰

Meanwhile, the Navy Lieutenant succeeded in arranging for naval gunfire from the USS NEVADA. At 2145 the first salvo of 18 rounds of 14-inch "high concussion" shells impacted right on top of the German armored force. Vandervoort recalled that it was "absolutely awesome" shooting, and that the armored vehicles "looked like big,

fat waterbugs as they scurried into lanes and fields in their haste to get off the highway and into cover."⁹¹ The smoke and dust from the salvo completely obscured the 2/505 sector. At about 2202 the naval liaison officer registered a second salvo on the fleeing survivors. As this force withdrew Vandervoort contented himself with the supervision of increased combat patrols to maintain the line of communications with the 505 CP on DZ 0.⁹²

The fight for St. Mere-Eglise on D-Day was not yet concluded as one more German counterattack occurred at 2300. Vandervoort's northeastern roadblock, manned by LT Thomas J. McClean's 1st Platoon of D Company, came under moderate small arms fire. The attackers were the members of the battalion of the 922d Regiment which had fought against Turnball at Neuville-au-Plain. McClean shifted his BARs forward and engaged the Germans at a range of 150 yards. This caused the German battalion to bounce away from McClean's roadblock and west toward LT Oliver B. Carr's 2d Platoon, D Company, straddling the highway. Carr opened up and drove the attackers to the west again, this time into the Headquarters Company's positions, commanded by LT Shmees. At this point the Germans found a gap between D Company and HQ Company and they penetrated within a hundred meters of Vandervoort's CP. Schmees directed the fire of two 50 caliber machineguns (scrounged from the glider wreckage) into this column, decimating the

penetrating group and forcing the Germans to slip west again.

This time the German battalion ran successively into two H Company positions which strong-pointed the west side of St. Mere-Eglise. By midnight, this battalion of the 922d Regiment was rendered combat ineffective, and would not be a factor in subsequent fighting.⁹³ This concluded the fight for St. Mere-Eglise on D-Day, but the worst fighting was yet to take place.

Unknown to Vandervoort and Krause, the Germans were gearing up for a series of moves to seal off the 82d Airborne Division airhead line and destroy the paratroopers. Pre-invasion intelligence had placed the organic elements of the German 91st Division west of the Merderet River, but the bulk of the 1058th Regiment had been positioned just south of St. Mere-Eglise. As soon as General Oberst Dollman, commander of the German 7th Army in the Cotentin Peninsula, discovered that no airborne attacks were intended for Montebourg and that St. Mere-Eglise had been captured, he directed the convergence of the 709th Division, the 91st Division, the 6th Parachute Regiment, the 922d Regiment, the 100th Panzer Replacement Battalion, and the 7th Army Sturm Battalion on St. Mere-Eglise.⁹⁴ Attacks would commence at dawn on the morning of 7 June.

At about 0800, 7 June, Vandervoort got news about the status of the amphibious landings. Ridgway had

dispatched his assistant G-3 with a patrol to link-up with the 4th Infantry Division on Utah Beach. Ridgway wanted General Raymond O. Barton to know that St. Mere-Eglise was under attack from the north, south, and west and that the status of causeways east of the Merderet was in question. This information was to be passed to the VII Corps Commander, MG Collins. Ridgway's patrol stopped in St. Mere-Eglise at 0800 7 June on their way back to DZ 0, informing Vandervoort that both the 8th Infantry Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division and COL Edson Raff's "Howell Force" would reach St. Mere-Eglise in the afternoon.⁹⁵

Not long after he received this information, Vandervoort was in the middle of the renewed German counterattacks from the north. This time, the commander of the German 709th Division was sending significant combat power to get the job done. General Leutnant von Schlieben's force consisted of the 1st Battalion, 1058th Regiment, the 7th Sturm Battalion, and two motorized heavy artillery battalions and a company of ten self-propelled guns from the 709th Anti-Tank Battalion. Schlieben attacked with two battalions abreast, with the 1st Battalion, 1058th Regiment on the east side of the highway and the 7th Sturm Battalion on the west side. Schlieben weighted the 7th Sturm Battalion with the ten SP guns.⁹⁶

On they came, determined to oust the paratroopers from St. Mere-Eglise. The 1st Battalion made little initial progress, but the 7th Sturm Battalion, a specially

trained attack unit, pushed in some of the D Company positions and reached the outskirts of town. One of the SP guns got within 50 meters of Vandervoort's CP before PVT John E. Atchley, single-handedly manning the 57mm gun positioned by Vandervoort on D-Day, destroyed that vehicle and disabled a follow-on gun.⁹⁷ In spite of these gains, the commander of the 7th Sturm Battalion opted to await the arrival of the 1st Battalion before continuing.

To the D Company Commander, CPT Taylor G. Smith, the 1st Battalion appeared to be on the verge of a breakthrough in his sector. Smith, incapacitated with a back injury, dispatched his XO, LT Waverly W. Wray, to the battalion CP to request help. Wray, a junior officer very much respected by the officers and men of 2/505, explained the D Company situation to Vandervoort. Vandervoort had no reserves to commit to the D Company sector, so he suggested that Wray take a D Company platoon not heavily engaged with the Germans and counterattack the force which penetrated the company positions. Wray quickly returned and informed Smith of the battalion commander's response. Wray then went on a personal reconnaissance to better formulate the counterattack he would lead. For his subsequent actions, Vandervoort would describe Wray as "the 82d Airborne Division's undiscovered World War II equivalent of SGT Alvin C. York."⁹⁹

Wray had gone about 300 meters when he ran into an eight-man German patrol. When the patrol attempted to

outdraw him as he tried to capture them, Wray killed them all. This brought the attention of two Germans about 100 meters from Wray, who slightly wounded Wray with Schmeisser machine-pistol fire. Wray ducked behind a hedgerow, reloaded his M1, then killed these two Germans. Wray then continued his reconnaissance right into the center of the German positions. Stealthily making his way back to D Company, Wray gathered the spare platoon and headed back to the spot where he felt the Germans were the most vulnerable. Stopping short of the intended point of attack, Wray had the platoon set up their 60mm mortar. The mortar squad then fired as fast as they could, with Wray personally calling corrections as the rounds blasted the German positions. The 1st Battalion now broke and fled. Wray had killed the battalion commander and staff in his earlier exchange with the eight Germans, and now the 1st Battalion ran leaderless into adjacent D Company positions. D Company inflicted significant slaughter on this force, causing a German officer to wave a white flag and ask for a one-hour truce to remove the wounded. This turned out to be a stratagem for the Germans to cover their withdrawal. When "negotiations" concluded, an artillery barrage impacted on the platoon and the rest of the battalion made their getaway.¹⁰⁰ "Wray shattered the battalion," Vandervoort recalled.¹⁰¹ The 1st Battalion lost 50% of its strength due to Wray. The 7th Sturm Battalion, with its left flank unprotected, also

withdrew to the north in disorder. The repulse of these two battalions enabled D Company to restore its positions astride Highway 13. Nevertheless, German artillery fire continued to pound 2/505 positions.¹⁰²

Vandervoort's sound and savage defense once more saved St. Mere-Eglise from being overrun.¹⁰³ At about noon, Van Fleet's 8th Infantry entered the southern outskirts of St. Mere-Eglise. In fairly short order, the 764th Tank Battalion arrived, followed by Edson Raff's "Howell Force". In the midst of another German artillery barrage, COL Van Fleet and MG Collins rolled through St. Mere-Eglise, bound for Ridgway's CP west of town. Ridgway and Van Fleet immediately planned a coordinated attack to destroy the remaining elements of the 7th Sturm Battalion and the 1058th Regiment outside Neuville-au-Plain.¹⁰⁴

Van Fleet's troops ran into trouble trying to extricate the 795th Georgian Battalion from the Turqueville-Fauville ridge south of St. Mere-Eglise, so the coordinated attack with Ridgway's paratroopers did not kick off at 1700, as intended. Stepped-up German artillery, mortar, and small arms fires indicated the Germans were going to try another counterattack. The 505 Regimental Commander, COL Ekman, improvised a spoiling attack which consisted of Vandervoort's D and E Companies and some tanks from COL Hupfer's 764th Tank Battalion brought forward by Vandervoort's indomitable S-2, LT Doerfler.¹⁰⁵

Vandervoort sent these companies forward along the Highway 13 axis, and then pushed McClean's platoon from D Company into the attack when it returned from a mission to find Van Fleet's missing attack echelon. McClean doubletimed his platoon back from St. Martin de Vaneville in time to be met by Vandervoort, who issued "one of the fastest attack orders in 505 history."¹⁰⁶ Vandervoort told McClean that E Company was already attacking along the east side of the highway, and that McClean should rapidly advance in order to cover E Company's right flank. McClean moved out, again at the doubletime, and soon closed in on a large German element maneuvering to outflank E Company. In a matter of minutes, after a severe firefight, the combined combat power of Vandervoort's companies and the tanks brought forward by Doerfler overwhelmed the Germans. Hupfer's tanks, moving ahead of the paratroopers, knocked out the remaining SP guns at Neuville-au-Plain and liberated Turner Turnball's wounded from the day before. D and E Companies then captured all surviving members of the 7th Sturm Battalion and the 1058th Regiment.¹⁰⁷

Vandervoort's knockout blow on the German force north of St. Mere-Eglise brought the action around St. Mere-Eglise to a close. Vandervoort's resolute battalion had destroyed one German battalion and decimated three others. This forced General von Schlieben to withdraw the demoralized remnants of his battered command 1500 meters

north of Neuville-au-Plain to establish a hasty defensive line.

For his cool and magnificent performance, Ridgway awarded Vandervoort a Distinguished Service Cross. Vandervoort continued to lead with valor and fight with determination as his battalion participated in the engagements at Montebourg Station, St. Sauveur le Vicomte, and Hill 131. Vandervoort epitomized the spirit, tenacity, and calm professionalism of Ridgway's type of airborne battalion commander. He was, as Ridgway later wrote, "one of the bravest, toughest battle commanders I ever knew."¹⁰⁸

LEGEND:

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMPETENCY

COMMANDER	COMMUNICATIONS	LTC		
		VANDERVOORT	LYNCH	MOORE
BE A GOOD LISTENER		1		
COMMUNICATE INTENT CLEARLY		4		
COMMUNICATE NONVERBALLY		4		
COMMUNICATE ENTHUSIASM		3		
COMMUNICATE ORDERS CLEARLY		4		
COMMUNICATE STANDARDS		4		
COMMUNICATE UP, DOWN, HORIZONTALLY		4		
OBTAIN FEEDBACK		1		
STRESS SIMPLICITY		4		

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER /	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
SUPERVISE			
COMMAND FORWARD	3		
DON'T OVER-SUPERVISE	3		
ENFORCE SAFETY STANDARDS	0		
ESTABLISH CONTROLS	2		
ESTABLISH/ENFORCE STANDARDS	0		
FOLLOW-UP ON CORRECTIVE ACTION	0		
PROVIDE FEEDBACK	0		

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER TEACH. AND COUNSELING	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COACH/COUNSEL SUBORDINATES	3		
DEMAND ACTION	3		
DEVELOP SUBORDINATES	3		
TEACH SKILLS	1		
TRAIN FOR WAR	1		
USE AWARDS AND DISCIPLINE SYSTEM	4		

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
ACCEPT HONEST MISTAKES	1		
BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE UNIT	4		
CREATE STRONG UNIT IDENTITY	4		
DEMONSTRATE CARING	3		
DENONS. TRUST	4		
DEVELOP COOP. AND TEAMWORK	1		
DEVELOP SUBORD. TO REPLACE YOU	1		
SHOW CONFIDENCE IN SELF/TEAM	4		
ENCOURAGE BOLDNESS	4		
ENCOURAGE CANDOR	4		

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER SOLDIER TEAM	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
DEVELOPMENT			
ENCOURAGE	4		
SPEEDY ACTION			
GENERATE UNIT COHESION	4		
INCLUDE SUBORD. LEADERS IN DECISION-MAKING	1		
INSTILL DESIRE	4		
PROVIDE TOUGH, REPETITIVE, EXACTING TNG.	4		
TRAIN LEADER TEAMS	1		

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER TECH./ TACTICAL PROFICIENCY	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
APPLY TENETS OF AIRLAND BATTLE DOCTRINE	4		
IMPLEMENT THE AIRLAND BATTLE IMPERATIVES	4		
EMPLOY BATTLEFIELD OPERATING SYSTEMS	4		

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMPETENCY

COMMANDER DECISION- MAKING	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
ACCEPT PRUDENT RISKS IN SUBORD.	4		
BE ASSERTIVE	4		
BE CREATIVE	4		
DELEGATE AUTH./MATCH RESPONSES.	4		
IMPLEMENT PLAN	4		
IMPROVISE	4		
INCLUDE ALL LEADERS IN DECISION-MAKING	1		
TAKE APPROP. ACTION IN THE ABSENCE/ORDERS	4		
TAKE CALCULATED RISKS	4		
TAKE DECISIVE ACTION	4		

<div> <div>COMMANDER</div> <div> <div>DECISION- MAKING</div> <div>USE AND EXPECT GOOD JUDGMENT</div> </div> </div>	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
	4		

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
PLANNING			
ADJUST ACCORD. TO SITUATION	1		
BE ADAPTABLE	3		
ESTABLISH CLEAR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4		
ESTABLISH SENSE COMMON PURPOSE FOR THE UNIT	4		
ESTABLISH COURSES OF ACTION TO MEET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4		
ORGANIZE	4		
PLAN BEYOND INITIAL OPS.	1		

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER USE AVAILABLE SYSTEMS	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
APPROPRIATELY FILTER INFO. TO SUBORDINATES	0		
ACTIVELY SEEK NEEDED INFO.	0		
MANAGE RESOURCES (TIME, PEOPLE, INFO., THINGS)	0		

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
PROFESS. ETHICS			
ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY	4		
BE ROLE MODEL	4		
BE CANDID	4		
BE PHYSICALLY FIT	4		
DEMONSTRATE BEARING	3		
DEMONSTRATE COMPASSION	4		
DEMONSTRATE COURAGE	4		
DEMONSTRATE INTEGRITY	4		
DEMONSTRATE MATURITY	4		
DEMONSTRATE SELF-DISCIPLINE	4		

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER PROFESS. ETHICS	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
DEVELOP THE PROFESSIONAL ARMY ETHIC IN SUBORDINATES	1		
DEMONSTRATE SELFLESSNESS	4		

Analysis and Conclusions

Vandervoort clearly stands out as an exceptional leader under fire. His performance at St. Mere-Eglise has been touted as "the stuff of instant legend."¹⁰⁹ But what skills of command of battalions in combat can be learned by examining Vandervoort's performance with the leadership competency/performance indicator model?

COMMUNICATIONS

Vandervoort appears to be an effective communicator. While it is difficult to really assess whether he was a Good Listener, it is obvious that he displayed knowledge of information by properly implementing the commander's intent. There is no doubt that Vandervoort knew - and properly implemented - the intent of COL Ekman, the next higher commander, and the intent of the division commander, MG Ridgway. In fact, a case can be made that Vandervoort implemented Bradley's intent to secure the flanks of the VII Corps landings at Utah Beach. There is no way to assess the indicators back-brief information and provide feedback on what was briefed unless one analyzes Vandervoort's performance during the initial mission planning sessions for Operation Neptune. But, it is easy to see that Vandervoort did routinely respond to subordinates' input. He relied on information from his S-2, LT Doerfler, for a variety of decisions, and he obviously took great stock in the

situation estimates of his junior officers like Turner Turnball and Waverly Wray.

Vandervoort Clearly Communicated His Intent. All of the 2/505 company commanders on the perimeter in St. Mere-Eglise understood Vandervoort's intent to hold the decisive town. LT Turnball definitely understood the action necessary to accomplish the mission desired by Vandervoort. Vandervoort clearly communicated his intent through operations orders and other forms of direction when, for example, he issued mission guidance to LT Petersen before the battalion reserve moved out to cover Turnball's withdrawal from Neuville-au-Plain. His "fastest combat order in 505 history," given to Petersen as the Lieutenant joined the two company attack on 7 June is another example of clear intent.

Vandervoort's strong suit appears to be Communicate Nonverbally. By denying overt medical attention for his broken ankle and by getting wheeled around the battlefield on a portable ammunition cart, Vandervoort nonverbally underscored the dynamics of taking care of leader business in combat: no obstacle short of incapacitating injury should preclude the leader from mission accomplishment; a leader has the obligation to maintain a presence in the fight; a leader must not be too humble in combat, but must draw some attention to himself to communicate resolve and tenacity; and the leader should realize the vital impact of a sense of humor on the morale

of the battalion when faced with a difficult situation. Accounts by 2/505 veterans all point to the dramatic impact achieved by Vandervoort as he travelled to St. Mere-Eglise "like an eighteenth century Spanish general." There is no doubt Vandervoort nonverbally communicated he was "endowed with a lion heart" - the troopers and junior leaders of 2/505 were all affected by Vandervoort and they consequently endured the trials of artillery barrages and armor-heavy counterattacks because of his example. Vandervoort's actions complemented/reinforced unit standards which he established on training exercises in England and reiterated at DZ 0 and St. Mere-Eglise. Vandervoort set a leadership performance standard on 6 June which would drive 2/505 until the end of the war. He demonstrated a sense of urgency without panic - he was taking care of business, checking on Turnball, bringing forward 57mm guns, directing patrols, coordinating with adjacent commanders.

Vandervoort Communicated Enthusiasm by "persuading" the 101st NCOs to pull him around in the ammo cart so he could get the job done; by "encouraging" the 57mm gun crew to engage the German SP gun at Neuville; by "urging" Turnball to hold out as long as he could; and by "suggesting" that LT Wray counterattack the penetration in D Company's sector.

Another Vandervoort strength was that he Stressed Simplicity. He relied on supplemental instructions to

complete unique missions in the case of Turnball at Neuville, but did not overburden his lieutenant with anything other than COMMON SENSE COMBAT INSTRUCTIONS. He achieved simplicity by stressing the "why" of his orders rather than how to the degree that subordinates two echelons below fully understand the instructions/mission. Vandervoort simplified his combat orders by DEFINING SUCCESS for subordinates. Turnball knew what the final outcome of his delaying action was to be at Neuville. Petersen knew that success would be a textbook withdrawal by bounds from Neuville to cover Turnball. Wray knew that success meant the restoration of the D Company line. D and E Companies knew that success for their 7 June attack would be the destruction/capture of the remains of the German battalions near Neuville. In the course of fluid combat conditions there is no room for philosophical interpretation/interpolation/extrapolation of intent; the commander has an obligation to clear away potential misconceptions of what must be accomplished by describing what the end-state must look like for the operation to succeed. Three paragraph intent statements, so much in vogue in current operations orders, does nothing more than complicate subordinate execution of whatever intent was described. Battalion commanders especially should spell out for subordinates which tasks must absolutely be accomplished in order to meet not only the battalion intent, but the regiment intent - or the division intent,

as in Vandervoort's case. As the U.S. Army orients itself more and more to rapid deployment contingency operations, it is vital that senior leaders insure that the intent is simple enough and directly stated so that small unit leaders can achieve that intent on the ground.

Lastly, Vandervoort Communicated Up, Down, and Horizontally. Vandervoort maintained contact with the 505 CP via radio and runner throughout the fight for St. Mere-Eglise. He routinely communicated to his subordinates FACE-TO-FACE - a technique crucial to successful transmission of orders under fire. He met with Krause immediately after arriving in St. Mere-Eglise, stressed a simple command arrangement, and continually worked with Krause to shift reserves to threatened sectors.

SUPERVISE

Vandervoort's performance at St. Mere-Eglise epitomizes a battalion commander's supervision of subordinates in combat. Vandervoort Commanded Forward, personally inspecting selected tasks - like Turnball at Neuville - being accomplished by subordinates. He led by example, moving continuously among his battalion. He led his battalion column toward Neuville on 6 June; he did not establish a CP on DZ 0 and await reports.

Vandervoort Did Not Oversupervise. He used mission-type orders - auftragstaktik - when assigning tasks to subordinates, like Turnball or Petersen. His

mission orders to subordinates reiterated his trust and confidence in them. He set the ultimate goals, defined success, and allowed subordinates to take charge and employ the tactics, techniques, and procedures. He allowed Turnball to make his own dispositions in Neuville and fight his own engagement. He allowed Wray to determine how and where to conduct his own counterattack. Petersen chose his own tactics in covering Turnball's withdrawal. Doerfler roamed the battlefield on his own in search of intelligence and, in a true spark of combat initiative, he brought some tanks to St. Mere-Eglise. He fully accepted subordinates plans designed to accomplish the mission.

There is not enough source material available, interviews notwithstanding, that describes how Vandervoort Enforced Safety Standards. Realizing that this is an important factor both in peacetime training and in combat, this SKA would really be more applicable if it addressed "fire control measures", "command and control of direct and indirect fires", and "protection of troops". It is very difficult to assess the enforcement of safety standards in combat unless there is evidence to suggest fratricide or leader failure to take adequate measures to protect troops from enemy direct and indirect fires. Neither of these conditions apply in Vandervoort's case.

Establish Controls, Establish/Enforce Standards, Follow-Up on Corrective Action, and Provide Feedback are

SKAs in the SUPERVISE competency which have LPIs that have more of a training orientation than combat focus. When applied toward an analysis of Vandervoort's leadership in combat, the LPI seem to overlook the urgency of combat and the unforgiving cost of mistakes. Conducting performance evaluations and unannounced reviews of standards of compliance are LPI more conducive to peacetime training management than supervising combat activities.

TEACHING AND COUNSELING

This is another competency which, at face value, is difficult to use to assess Vandervoort's performance in combat. First, source material does not support an analysis. Second, most LPI are too ambiguous to adequately address combat performance. The SKA are good, but the absence of AirLand Battle tenets, imperatives, and elements of combat power takes the strength out of the competency.

Did Vandervoort Coach/Counsel Subordinates? He "coached" Turnball about making sound dispositions and employing delaying tactics at Neuville. He "coached" MAJ Maness, his ad hoc XO, on the requirements of the battalion command post before he visited Turnball on 6 June. He "coached" Wray on counterattacks. He "counseled" the 57mm gun crew about performing under fire. He "counseled" LT Doerfler about making too many individual patrols (Vandervoort forbade Doerfler from leaving the CP after he awarded his S-2 a DSC for his

episode with Hupfer's tanks) and making himself too vulnerable.

Vandervoort Demanded Action but it was more in the context of expecting and rewarding subordinate initiative than requiring corrective action on shortcomings. As for Developing Subordinates, Teaching Skills, and Training for War, the actions of Vandervoort's subordinates is indicative of his successful influence in the areas. Use an awards and discipline system is any easy one to assess: Vandervoort recommended Turnball for a DSC (he was awarded a Silver Star), Wray for a Medal of Honor (awarded a DSC), Doerfler for a DSC (awarded a DSC), and PVT Atchley for a DSC (awarded a DSC).

SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Ben Vandervoort was leading his battalion into combat for the first time. By Providing Tough, Repetitive, Exacting Training in England before the invasion, Vandervoort inculcated the essence of soldier and leader team development into his battalion.

Vandervoort was Responsible to the Unit in that both he and his subordinates placed the needs of the unit over self needs. Subordinates willingly obeyed his orders. He Created Strong Unit Identity by impressing the common goal of the defense of St. Mere-Eglise upon his subordinates. Vandervoort maintained sub-unit integrity for all missions: Turnball's entire platoon went to Neuville; Petersen's entire platoon went to Turnball's

and; all of E Company was placed in reserve; all of Wray's platoon conducted the counterattack.

Vandervoort Demonstrated Caring and Trust throughout the St. Mere-Eglise defense, as has been shown. He Developed Cooperation and Teamwork by Leading by Example and being with subordinates in the most difficult times. Vandervoort's conduct at St. Mere-Eglise shows how a combat leader Encourages Boldness, Candor, Initiative, Innovation, and Speedy Action. His battalion demonstrated it was a highly cohesive unit, that morale and esprit were high and the battalion considered itself a winner.

Much of the supporting SKA and LPI for this competency seems to describe the development of soldier and leader teams in training. But how does a battalion commander develop his teams in combat? While some SKA and LPI apply to a combat situation, and continuous combat operations, a more specific set of leader tasks and indicators needs to be developed.

TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL PROFICIENCY

Ben Vandervoort's performance at St. Mere-Eglise was technically and tactically competent. He CONDUCTED SUCCESSFUL COMBAT OPERATIONS. As has been described, Vandervoort demonstrated exceptional intiative in the conduct of his operations. An offensive spirit of improvisation, innovation, and aggressiveness, tempered with intelligent and prudent decision-making, was evident

in assignment of Turnball to Neuville and his defense of St. Mere-Eglise. As previously mentioned, subordinates like Turnball, Petersen, Wray, and Doerfler acted independently within the context of Vandervoort's overall plan. Vandervoort gained the tactical initiative immediately and by outposting Turnball to Neuville he acted within the German decision cycle. Once he seized the initiative, he maintained it. When it was appropriate he counterattacked north. Vandervoort demonstrated agility. It has been mentioned that his rapid movement off DZ 0 to Neuville and then to St. Mere-Eglise occurred faster than the German ability to react. Vandervoort's decision to outpost Neuville is the epitome of a combat leader quickly adapting to fluid situations and acting without hesitation. Vandervoort's command and control mechanism was flexible primarily because of his presence at decisive locations. Vandervoort used the full depth of the battlefield to keep the Germans "at arm's length" from St. Mere-Eglise, and his small but judiciously employed reserve - Petersen's platoon - allowed him to concentrate or shift assets to apply force where necessary.

Vandervoort fought the Germans throughout the depth of his defense. He used Turnball in a security operation to keep the Germans away from the main battle area in St. Mere-Eglise. Vandervoort took advantage of limited visibility to move, reorient defenses, and maintain pressure on the enemy. He achieved depth in defensive

actions by attacking the 1058 Regiment battalion throughout their entire formation to delay, disrupt, and ultimately destroy them. He used mortars, anti-aircraft guns, and naval gunfire to inflict damage along the length of the German armor column. Vandervoort maintained a small reserve, capable of flexible action.

Vandervoort synchronized all available combat power in the defense of St. Mere-Eglise. He took advantage of misdropped 101st Airborne Division paratroopers to augment his force. He used anti-aircraft guns to supplement his lack of anti-tank weapons. He called in naval gunfire while his paratroopers raked the German column with direct fire. He protected his men by keeping them tucked into hedgerows and buildings during artillery bombardments.

Vandervoort's actions at St. Mere-Eglise provide an exceptional example of the Implementation of AirLand Battle Imperatives in a combat situation. He ensured unity of effort by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to his battalion to limit the effects of friction in the operation. He set the example, as has been repeatedly shown, and he took risks, decisive action, and made sure subordinates like Turnball and W-way understood his intent. His instructions to his junior leaders are examples of clear and concise battlefield orders. His plans were simple in every instance, including his coordination with Krause for a command scheme for the overall defense of St. Mere-Eglise.

Vandervoort anticipated events on the battlefield. He got inside the German decision cycle by moving quickly and reacting to opportunities to exploit his agility and initiative. His ability to sense the flow of the battle - his "fingerspitzengefühl", or "sixth sense" - enabled him to make the monumental decision to outpost Neuville and thereby save St. Mere-Eglise. And he maintained the initiative once he seized it.

Vandervoort concentrated his combat power against enemy vulnerabilities in the sense that he created vulnerabilities by maintaining pressure on the Germans and acting faster than they could. He did not have overwhelming combat power but there is no denying his execution of the dynamics of maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership.

Vandervoort designated, sustained, and shifted the main effort. Turnbull was the main effort in the early stages of the defense of St. Mere-Eglise. Vandervoort sustained him by reinforcing him with the 57mm gun and crew. Vandervoort shifted the main effort to the main battle area after Turnbull returned, and then the 7 June counterattack by D and E Companies became the main effort.

Vandervoort fought aggressively and pressed the fight to a successful conclusion. He was able to do so because his battalion was physically fit and mentally tough and his soldiers mimicked his calm professionalism and single minded tenacity to fight in spite of injuries.

Vandervoort moved fast, struck hard, and finished rapidly in the close, restrictive terrain around St. Mere-Eglise. His movement from DZ 0 to Neuville was rapid, and his companies hit the German attackers as violently as they could in every brief engagement, using the hedgerows and buildings to achieve surprise. Wray's counterattack is a clear example of this imperative, as is the D and E Company counterattack on 7 June. Vandervoort used terrain, weather, deception, and OPSEC to win at St. Mere-Eglise. He used his terrain sense to protect his troopers, moved at night, and deceived the Germans into thinking his force was large by outposting Neuville and incorporating aggressive patrols around the town. Vandervoort conserved strength for decisive action by keeping his troopers under cover during bombardments, maintaining security by aggressive patrols, and sustaining their high morale through his personal example.

Vandervoort used combined arms and sister services to complement and reinforce his battalions' weapons systems. His use of the 57mm guns and naval gunfire are examples of this imperative. His troopers used land mines at roadblocks which posed a real dilemma for the attacking Germans. Vandervoort understood the effects of battle on soldiers, units, and leaders and compensated for the affects of fatigue and fear by the force of his presence and by instilling in every man in the battalion the

absolute necessity of defending St. Mere-Eglise in order to save the invasion.

DECISION MAKING

Vandervoort made some of the best tactical decisions of the invasion and of the war. He did so by making sound, timely decisions at the lowest practical level. He Accepted Prudent Risks in Subordinates. He allowed subordinates to take the initiative as in the case of Turnball's stand at Neuville, Wray's counterattack, and Doerfler bringing forward Hupfer's tanks. These examples also show Vandervoort's subordinates making independent decisions while operating within commander's intent.

Vandervoort was an assertive leader. He took decisive action, as in sending Turnball north while he took the battalion to St. Mere-Eglise. He demonstrated moral courage to stand by this decision by not sacrificing Turnball at Neuville. The move to send Turnball to Neuville was ferociously audacious. Vandervoort was extremely candid with Turnball about the prospects of success at Neuville.

Vandervoort was Creative in his attempts to upgrade his individual mobility and the firepower of his battalion. He travelled by ammo cart and then jeep. He scrounged .30 and .50 caliber machineguns and ammo and two 57mm anti-aircraft guns for his defense. He used original thought to request naval gunfire on advancing German armor. He constantly used practiced, practical judgement.

Vandervoort clearly Delegated Authority to Match Responsibility. Turnball ran the outpost at Neuville, making decisions at his level, and Vandervoort accepted those decisions. Company commanders were in charge of their sectors of defense in St. Mere-Eglise. They made the decisions - actually the sergeants or lieutenants at the roadblocks made the decisions - to engage German targets. Vandervoort delegated the responsibility for the establishment and organization of the battalion CP to MAJ Maness, a field grade officer from 1/505 who assembled with 2/505 after being misdropped.

Vandervoort definitely Implemented a Plan. He kept Ekman informed of the Neuville situation and the defense of St. Mere-Eglise to insure his plans met Ekman's intent. He checked on his subordinates to ensure specific actions were carried out. He visited Turnball after 1300 on 6 June, dropping off the 57mm gun. In spite of his lack of maneuverability when not in his jeep, Vandervoort still continually checked with his companies to see if the defensive plan needed adjustments. There can be no argument with Vandervoort's Improvisation on 6 and 7 June, as he used stray 101st troopers, anti-aircraft weapons and crews, and naval gunfire for artillery.

Vandervoort's performance in Normandy is perhaps one of the best examples of a battalion commander Taking Appropriate Actions in Combat in the Absence of Specific Orders.

He exploited opportunities by taking advantage of his rapid assembly in the first hours after the jump to move on Neuville. He used the Turnball outpost as a method to improve current operations up to the operational level of war. He was fully prepared - as a veteran of Sicily and Salerno - to operate autonomously and isolated without loss of unit effectiveness: Vandervoort had assumed not only the regimental mission but the division mission as well when he began his move on Neuville and St. Mere-Eglise. He Took Calculated Risks by outposting Neuville and strongpointing the northern sector of St. Mere-Eglise with roadblocks. He took decisive action, Using and Expecting Good Judgement. Vandervoort was conspicuous for his estimate of the situation - the entire division situation - after the jump; his analysis of courses of action; his implementation of a plan; and his supervision of the mission until it was accomplished. He did not hesitate to make decisions in the absence of clear guidance from COL Ekman or MG Ridgway. His actions at St. Mere-Eglise not only pass the test of "the actions of a reasonable man," but establish the performance standard for airborne battalion commanders.

PLANNING

The lack of available source material on Vandervoort's plan to execute the original 2/505 battalion mission at Neuville-au-Plain precludes a thorough review of his deliberate planning techniques. However, the

supporting SKA for plan effectively may be applied to an examination of his rapid battlefield planning for the defense of St. Mere-Eglise.

This is absolutely no doubt that Vandervoort was quite able to Adjust According to the Situation. He made timely and appropriate changes to plans when added information dictates as seen in assessment of the regimental and division situations while he was still on DZ 0. While there is no evidence to suggest that Ridgway directed Vandervoort to assume the 3/505 mission, it is certainly clear that Vandervoort had enough information and intuition to know that an abrupt departure from his original mission was imminent.

Vandervoort was Adaptable. He made not only an appropriate adjustment in the fluid situation he encountered enroute to Neuville, he rapidly implemented changes with minimal loss of effectiveness. His decision to send Turnball to outpost Neuville actually enhanced the effectiveness of his defense of St. Mere-Eglise. He had plans for contingencies. Vandervoort was able to establish Clear Goals and Objectives in his adjusted plan. For Turnball, the objective was the defense of Neuville; the goal was to delay the German approach to St. Mere-Eglise as long as possible. For the company commanders of 2/505 the objective was the defense of St. Mere-Eglise; the goal was to hold the vital division objective until reinforced from Utah Beach. The

simplicity of Vandervoort's scheme and the logic and common sense of his subsequent actions ensured that his subordinates understood the goals and the sequence and timings of tasks. None of his actions deviated from the express intent of Ekman or Ridgway.

Vandervoort Established Courses of Action to Meet Goals and Objectives. He considered the resources available - his battalion - and considered METT-T. He then organized rapidly, prioritized his tasks, and allocated resources: Turnball to Neuville, battalion(-) to St. Mere-Eglise; one 57mm gun to Turnball, one to St. Mere-Eglise. He Planned Beyond Initial Operations by alerting, then sending, a relief force to Turnball at Neuville, maintained Petersen's platoon as the battalion reserve throughout the operation, and then was flexible enough to promptly kick out D and E Companies for the 7 June attack to seize Neuville. All of his planning actions supported the intent of his superiors. Undeniably Vandervoort's compressed, or rapid, battlefield planning competency is worthy of emulation and is a superb "how to do it" study.

USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS

Analysis of Vandervoort's performance with this competency is not entirely appropriate. Vandervoort cannot be evaluated for computer literacy, for example, and examining his ability to effectively employ management technology seems to miss the focus of combat

leadership. An argument for a revised competency more fitting for analysis of combat leadership - in association with AirLand Battle Doctrine - will be presented in the conclusions to the thesis.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Vandervoort's performance at St. Mere-Eglise provides one of the most shining examples of the application of the professional Army ethic in combat. Better yet, his actions form a model of what a light infantry battalion commander should demonstrate under fire (or at NTC/JRTC). Pre-command course officers should be required to study his combat performance at St. Mere-Eglise.

Ben Vandervoort Accepted Responsibility for not only his actions and decisions, he assumed responsibility for fulfilling the mission of his regiment, his division, and the VII Corps. Ordinarily, battalion commanders don't find themselves faced with such an awesome predicament - or opportunity. As the Army continues to conduct contingency operations, it is conceivable that future light infantry battalion commanders may find themselves in the middle of a similar situation. Vandervoort's performance validates every SKA of this competency.

He was a role model. He led by example: he stayed in the action in spite of his broken left ankle. Wheeled about on the ammo cart, he exuded the tangible, infectuous attributes of a commander in charge of the

situation. His subordinates mimicked his example - Turnball taking charge at Neuville and holding out until almost completely surrounded, "saving the invasion"; Wray taking charge of a counterattack force which decisively repelled the German penetration into St. Mere-Eglise and led to the subsequent destruction of four German battalions. Vandervoort's D Company commander, CPT Taylor Smith, mimicked his battalion commander's refusal to be evacuated as he endured a debilitating back injury, commanding his company while lying in the prone position. Even LTC Krause came back into action after one night in the aid station. Scores of 2/505 men refused to be evacuated for wounds due to Vandervoort's example and the fact that he had so overtly demonstrated the ultimate importance of holding St. Mere-Eglise.

Vandervoort was Candid. He was frank, open, and honest with his subordinates. He told Turnball just how tough his mission at Neuville would be. He articulated the great responsibility for holding St. Mere-Eglise to his company commanders. His instructions to Wray accounted for the shortage of reserves to handle the penetration of D Company. His succinct "combat order" to Petersen as the 7 June attack was initiated was unvarnished fact. His coordinations with Krause were a model of simplicity and honesty.

Vandervoort was Physically Fit. He demonstrated phenomenal endurance after long operations - his broken

ankle was not set in a cast until the middle of July. He led his battalion out of St. Mere-Eglise on the division's attack west after St. Mere-Eglise had been reinforced.

The "eighteenth century Spanish General"

Demonstrated Confidence in himself and his battalion.

This attitude was apparent in his actions throughout the fight for St. Mere-Eglise. Vandervoort Demonstrated Compassion. He checked on Turnball after 1200 on D-Day, concerned for the safety of the exposed platoon. He fired a flare at 1500 in an attempt to signal Turnball to withdraw. He sent Petersen's platoon to cover Turnball's retrograde movement. He constantly moved around St. Mere-Eglise, by jeep or by foot, checking on his troopers.

Vandervoort Demonstrated Courage. He was tenacious in the face of adversity. He shared the hardships of the repeated counterattacks and the continuous artillery bombardments with his men. He exposed himself to fire to deliver a 57mm gun to Turnball and then "encouraged" the crew to disregard German fires and engage the self-propelled guns. He braved artillery fires to return to St. Mere-Eglise to improvise a relief force for Turnball. He stayed in the fight with a broken ankle, clearly demonstrating physical confidence.

Vandervoort Demonstrated Integrity in his candid dealings with subordinates, peers, and superiors. There was nothing selfish, unethical, or dishonest in his performance. He obeyed the law of land warfare by

collecting wounded Germans and evacuating them to his aid station. He Demonstrated Maturity in his logical, professional decisionmaking. He was "a mountain of calm optimism" in comparison to Krause. He Demonstrated Self-Discipline by doing what was correct while under fire. He made one of the war's best tactical decisions. He definitely did not take the easy way out because of his injury. He displayed enormous strength of will and positive control over the situation. His example influenced the behavior of his battalion.

Finally, Vandervoort was absolutely Self-Less. He was concerned for the safety of the entire invasion, not his own well-being. His loyalty to his organization - in fact, to his division - is best seen as he attaches his battalion to Krause's, insisting Krause "call the shots".

ENDNOTES

- 1 Gerard M. Devlin, Paratrooper, pp. 356-358.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid., p. 357.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 370-372.
- 5 Ibid., p. 372.
- 6 Ibid., p. 370.
- 7 Ibid., p. 371.
- 8 Ibid., p. 372.
- 9 Ibid., pp. 372-373.
- 10 Ibid., p. 373.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 505th Regimental Unit History, "The Capture of St. Mere-Eglise," p. 3.
- 13 Ibid., p. 4.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Napier Crookenden, Drop Zone Normandy, p. 73.
- 16 Ibid., pp. 74-76.
- 17 Clay Blair, Ridgway's Paratroopers, p. 286.
- 18 505th Regimental Unit History, p. 5.
- 19 Ibid., p. 5.
- 20 Blair, p. 230.
- 21 505th Regimental Unit History, p. 5.
- 22 Blair, pp. 607-608.
- 23 Cornelius Ryan, A Bridge Too Far, p. 463.
- 24 Crookenden, pp. 77-78.

- 25 Ibid., p. 111.
- 26 LTG James M. Gavin, On to Berlin, p. 8.
- 27 Blair, p. 267.
- 28 Crookenden, p. 113.
- 29 Blair, p. 267.
- 30 Crookenden, p. 113.
- 31 Blair, p. 268.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Crookenden, p. 113.
- 34 Blair, p. 268.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Crookenden, p. 113.
- 37 Blair, p. 271.
- 38 Ibid., p. 278.
- 39 John R. Galvin, Air Assault, pp. 143-145.
- 40 Cornelius Ryan, The Longest Day, pp. 127-128.
- 41 Allen Langdon, Ready, p. 55.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Gavin, p. 97.
- 45 Blair, p. 270.
- 46 Ryan, The Longest Day, p. 127.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Blair, p. 285.
- 49 Ibid., pp. 285-286.
- 50 Ibid., p. 250.
- 51 505 Regimental Unit Study, p. 11.

- 52 Blair, p. 287.
- 53 Langdon, p. 55.
- 54 John Keegan, Six Armies in Normandy, p. 95.
- 55 Crookenden, p. 118.
- 56 Langdon, p. 55.
- 57 Blair, p. 287.
- 58 Crookenden, p. 118 and Keegan, p. 95.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 Keegan, p. 95.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Langdon, p. 56; Gavin, p. 123; Keegan, p. 95;
505 Regimental Unit Study, p. 12 and Blair, p. 287.
- 63 Blair, p. 287.
- 64 Langdon, p. 56; Keegan, p. 96 and 505
Regimental Unit Study, pp. 12-13.
- 65 Crookenden, p. 118.
- 66 505 Regimental Unit Study, pp. 13-14.
- 67 Ibid., p. 14.
- 68 Langdon, p. 56.
- 69 505 Regimental Unit Study, p. 14.
- 70 Langdon, p. 54.
- 71 Blair, p. 288.
- 72 Langdon, p. 56.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 Blair, p. 288.
- 76 Langdon, p. 56.
- 77 Keegan, p. 97.

78 Langdon, p. 57.

79 The remainder of E Company had been dropped wide of DZ 0. The 2d Platoon assembled and fought with the 508 and the 3d Platoon attached itself to Edson Raff's "Howell Force" which landed a segment of the 82d on Utah Beach.

80 Langdon, p. 57.

81 Ibid. Turnball left his ambulatory wounded behind, but they were freed from the Germans on the night of 7-8 June.

82 Crookenden, pp. 119-120.

83 Keegan, p. 98.

84 Ibid. Vandervoort recommended Turnball for a DSC. Turnball received a posthumous Silver Star.

85 Langdon, p. 55n.

86 Blair, pp. 288-289.

87 Langdon, p. 55.

88 Blair, p. 289.

89 Ibid.

90 Langdon, p. 58.

91 Ibid.

92 505 Regimental Unit Study, pp. 38-40.

93 Langdon, pp. 59-60.

94 Ibid., p. 59.

95 Blair, pp. 297-307.

96 Langdon, p. 60.

97 Ibid., p. 60n. Atchley was awarded a DSC for this action under constant fire. He was killed in the Ardennes. A swimming pool at Ft. Bragg is named for him.

99 Ibid., p. 61n.

100 Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁰¹ Blair, pp. 307-308. Wray was nominated for a Medal of Honor, but was awarded a DSC. He was killed in Holland.

¹⁰² Langdon, p. 61.

¹⁰³ Blair, p. 308.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Langdon, p. 61. LT Doerfler received the DSC for his actions in this fight.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 64. Vandervoort curtailed Doerfler's future activities as he was so valuable as 2/505 S-2.

¹⁰⁸ Blair, p. 289.

CHAPTER 5

LTC JAMES H. LYNCH, 12 SEPTEMBER 1950

The operational picture for the U.S. Eighth Army in Korea in August, 1950, was exceedingly bleak. In just over a month of combat on the Korean peninsula, Lieutenant General Walton Walker's forces had been steadily pushed backwards by the over-powering attacks of the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). By the end of August, Walker's troops had been pressed into a semi-circular defensive perimeter at the southeastern-most tip of South Korea. In spite of his successes in thwarting the NKPA drive, Walker was forced to "circle the wagons" around Pusan, the Eighth Army's logistic base in Korea and the reinforcement and resupply lifeline to theatre support in Japan. Hard fighting by U.S. divisions had momentarily stabilized the Pusan Perimeter,¹ but Walker was on the verge of being pushed into the sea by the powerful NKPA assault echelons.

Fortunately for LTG Walker and his weary U.S. divisions, the NKPA was also facing a vexing operational situation. Generalissimo Kim Il Sung's invasion of South Korea had been based on a "quick, easy victory" over the Republic of Korea (ROK) forces, but the American intervention forced the "once fast-moving and victorious NKPA troops" into a stalemate of "costly, indecisive, and discouraging positional warfare."² The NKPA in late August was a "desperately tired and ragtag army" which had

been in continuous, bitter combat for two months. Far from its own logistics bases, the NKPA was hampered by "acute shortages" in everything from rifles, ammunition, and food to trained replacements.³ Even though Kim Il Sung conscripted 35,000 "fillers" to reconstitute his battered attack divisions, the NKPA were in danger of "losing the logistical and manpower" advantage over the U.S. forces.⁴

Worse than that, the NKPA high command was aware that General Douglas MacArthur was poised to execute a bold strategic amphibious envelopment of the rear of the NKPA positions. With all of its forces positioned to overrun the Pusan Perimeter, the NKPA lacked sufficient resources to counter MacArthur's potential war-winning attack.⁵ Unsure as to the location of the American amphibious assault, Kim Il Sung was pressured to arrive at a maneuver that would not only provide for the defense of the NKPA rear area but would also decisively defeat the Americans in Korea.⁶ Consequently, Sung planned to "make one last do-or-die attempt to crack the Pusan Perimeter and overrun Eighth Army."⁷ A monumental NKPA offensive against Walker's thinly-held positions "would almost certainly force a cancellation" of MacArthur's amphibious strategem.⁸ Better yet, by decimating Walker's Eighth Army, Kim Il Sung would be in a position to claim both military and political victory over the South Koreans.⁹

The NKPA began its offensive on the night of 31 August 1950. 98,000 fanatic NKPA troops struck Walker's perimeter in four separate attacks designed to affect simultaneous breakthroughs across the entire front of Eighth Army.¹⁰ For six days the fighting raged in increasing severity, with Walker's perimeter contracting and then expanding in a maddening see-saw of attacks and counterattacks. The key terrain of the perimeter - the ubiquitous Korean hills - was bitterly contested and changed hands daily.¹¹

One of the most critical sectors of the perimeter was the northwest sector, held by the over-extended 1st Cavalry Division. Just inside the front lines of the defense lay the town of Taegu, a key road junction and site of Eighth Army headquarters. Major General "Hap" Gay's 1st Cav Division was responsible for securing Taegu and maintaining control of a wide, flat corridor of open "tank country" northeast of Taegu known as "the bowling alley". An NKPA breakthrough near Taegu would not only endanger Eighth Army command, control and communications, it would provide the NKPA with a high speed avenue of approach into the rear of ROK forces holding the northeastern sector of the perimeter.¹² To insure Gay's division could handle the tough assignment, Walker rapidly shifted three fresh battalions to the 1st Cav sector. Reinforcing the sector and bringing the 1st Cav Division to authorized strength were the 3d Battalion, 5th Cavalry

Regiment, commanded by LTC Edgar J. Treacy; the 3d Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, commanded by LTC Harold K. "Johnny" Johnson; and the 3d Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, commanded by LTC James H. Lynch.¹³

The 3d Battalion, 7th Cav had been hastily organized and activated at Ft. Benning, Georgia in response to Eighth Army's requests for additional combat troops.¹⁴ Principally composed of former personnel of the Infantry School's demonstration troops from 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, LTC Lynch's provisional battalion had more veterans of infantry problems than it did of World War II.¹⁵ Rounding out the authorized strength of the battalion were scores of Ft. Benning's cooks and truck drivers, reassigned as riflemen.¹⁶ Alerted immediately for overseas movement to Japan, Lynch had only "about two weeks" time to conduct combat training for his ad hoc unit.¹⁷ Once underway to Japan, Lynch was notified that his battalion would instead be shipped directly to Pusan, Korea, to reinforce Walker's beleaguered perimeter. Lynch, who had not commanded troops in combat in WWII, made the most of the training opportunities presented by the lengthy sea movement to Korea. He innovatively rigged field telephones between staterooms and rehearsed his officers in command post exercises. Topside, the combat experienced noncommissioned officers directed rifle marksmanship for the unskilled cooks and truck drivers.¹⁸

LTC James H. Lynch's new and untested 3/7 Cav arrived at Pusan at the same time three NKPA divisions moved into position to attack the 1st Cav Division sector. Totalling 22,000 men - a third of whom were green, untrained fillers - the combined manpower of the 1st, 3d, and 13th NKPA divisions were staged to slice Walker's perimeter in half and drive to Pusan.¹⁹ But Walker's intelligence staff had intercepted and decoded NKPA radio traffic and Walker now knew when and where the NKPA would strike.²⁰ In keeping with U.S. Army doctrine and his own strong, personal, George Patton-like belief in offensive combat, Walker directed Gay to launch a spoiling attack to disrupt the NKPA offensive.²¹ After much discussion with his staff, Gay agreed to attack from the center of his sector with Colonel Cecil Nist's 7th Cavalry Regiment.²² For LTC Lynch and his inexperienced battalion of cooks and school troops, their first combat mission would occur within two days of their arrival in Korea.²³

Nist's plan of attack was poor and "everything that could go wrong did."²⁴ The well-entrenched NKPA decisively repulsed Nist's two battle-tested battalions - 1/7 Cav and 2/7 Cav - who spearheaded the attack. Next came Lynch's combat debut. Replacing 1/7 Cav, Lynch's 3/7 Cav made a "second, ill-advised attack" against strong NKPA positions on Hill 518 on 2 September 1950.²⁵ Meeting the NKPA for the first time only days after

completing the voyage to Korea, and enduring highly accurate NKPA 82mm and 120mm mortar fires, Lynch's 3/7 Cav fared no better than Nist's veteran battalions.²⁶

MG Gay's "futile spoiling attack" now placed the entire division in a poor position to meet the NKPA attack.²⁷ Sensing an opening, the three NKPA divisions smashed into the 1st Cav Division's defective dispositions. The 1st Cav "reeled in disarray," unhinged by the NKPA flanking movements.²⁸ Nist's 7th Cav came apart at the seams when it discovered hundreds of NKPA soldiers on hills to its rear.²⁹ Forced to fight back toward its original line of departure, the 7th Cav "disintegrated," abandoning weapons, ammunition, and vehicles.²⁹ In the midst of the chaotic fighting withdrawal through the hills north of Taegu, Lynch's 3/7 Cav experienced two days of repeated enemy attacks and disorganizing night actions.³⁰ "Though casualties had not been high, morale was shaken and large amounts of materiel had been lost."³¹ Lynch led his battalion in a 14-mile foot march back to Taegu to be re-equipped.³²

For the youngest son of a West Point general and former chief of infantry,³³ the initial experience of commanding a battalion in combat was vastly different from the staged tactical scenarios at Ft. Benning. Even though 3/7 Cav was off to an inauspicious start, it was destined to never repeat such a performance. In fact, within the space of three weeks, Lynch's 3/7 Cav would demonstrate

such a remarkable turn-around in combat achievement that it would have the rare distinction of being awarded two Presidential Unit Citations. Clearly indicative of his rapid maturation as a combat battalion commander and representative of his superior leadership under fire, thirty-six-year-old LTC James H. Lynch would be awarded an unprecedented two Distinguished Service Crosses in fourteen days. The amazing achievements of LTC Lynch and his intrepid battalion would go a long way toward inspiring other battalions in the 1st Cav Division, and the Eighth Army, to higher levels of performance.³⁴

The NKA successes against the 1st Cav Division jeopardized the security of Taegu. In response to mounting NKPA pressure in the Taegu area, LTG Walker ordered MG Gay on 5 September to withdraw the 1st Cav to positions in an arc just eight miles north of Eighth Army headquarters.³⁵ As a precaution since "evacuation seemed almost a certainty," Walker ordered "most of the Eighth Army staff" and the 1st Cav's ammo trains to Pusan.³⁶ Without much apparent coaxing on Walker's part, the neighboring ROK Army headquarters also followed the Eighth Army staff to Pusan.³⁷

For the next five days in the region just north of Taegu, the 1st Cav Division was compelled to "fight for its very existence."³⁸ The NKPA, flushed with success, swarmed over and around the hills, infiltrating behind positions, seizing high ground, and isolating small 1st

Cav units. Once they were in possession of commanding terrain, the NKPA began an incessant campaign of 120mm mortar fires to unhinge the next U.S. position. "They had to be rooted out, hill by hill, in an endless succession of company and platoon attacks."³⁹ Losses on both sides were ghastly, yet the NKPA continued to inch closer and closer to Taegu.

LTC Lynch and 3/7 Cav remained on stand-by in Taegu as part of the 1st Cav Division reserve and were not initially committed to the vicious combat north of Taegu.⁴⁰ However, on 9 September 1950, MG Gay opted to move one of his reserve battalions closer to the fighting to establish a blocking position astride the Taegu-Tabu-dong Road.⁴¹ LTC Lynch and 3/7 Cav drew the assignment. Temporarily attached to the 8th Cav Regiment, Lynch moved his battalion into the positions specified by the division commander, a mere seven miles from Taegu. Lynch placed Company L astride the Taegu-Tabu-dong Road to physically block the highway, and situated Company K on high ground to the west - Hill 181 - to cover Company L's left flank. To cover Company L's right flank, Lynch positioned Company I on high ground to the east of the highway - Hill 184. Rearmed, somewhat rested, 3/7 assumed its mission, anxious to prove itself.⁴²

The situation continued to deteriorate in the 1st Cav sector. By 11 September the NKPA had seized control of Hill 314, a 1000-foot promontory which gave them

excellent observation of all 1st Cav movements around Taegu. The NKPA immediately began to shell Taegu with 120mm mortars.⁴³ Repeated attacks by COL Ray Palmer's 8th Cav Regiment failed to dislodge the NKPA from their strong positions.⁴⁴ Unless the NKPA could be ousted from the commanding heights of Hill 314, "the fall of Taegu seemed inevitable."⁴⁵

The "dire threat" now posed by the NKPA caused LTG Walker to order "a loosely coordinated but all-out" counterattack by the 1st Cav and ROK 1st divisions.⁴⁶ MG Gay's 1st Cav Division had the mission to recapture Hill 314. The ROK 1st Division would attack to recapture the walled city of Kasan - Hill 901 - due north of Hill 314. At the same time, Walker shifted elements of the 5th Infantry Regiment to Taegu to backstop the counterattack.⁴⁷

On 11 September MG Gay directed COL Nist to move his 7th Cav Regiment into position to relieve Palmer's 8th Cav and assume responsibility for the capture of Hill 314. Due to its close proximity to the 8th Cav front lines and its manpower strength, Nist selected Lynch's 3/7 Cav to be the regimental main effort for the attack on Hill 314, scheduled to commence at 121100 September 1950.⁴⁸ Nist also ordered 2/7 Cav to make a supporting attack to seize Hill 660 and secure Lynch's eastern flank. 1/7 Cav was directed to move to Taegu to become the base unit of the division reserve.⁴⁹

To assist in the 7th Cav attack on Hill 314, COL Palmer assigned his 1st and 2d Battalions to hold their defensive positions west of the highway on Hill 624 to protect Lynch's left flank. Also, 3/8 Cav, relieved by Lynch for the main attack, would move backward from its exposed positions and occupy an assembly area on a finger which ran southwest from Hill 660. For all intents and purposes, LTC Harold K. Johnson's 3/8 Cav would follow and support Lynch from its position as 8th Cav reserve.⁵⁰ Lastly, Nist arranged for an ROK training battalion, already operating with 8th Cav, to act as an "intermediate" reserve behind Lynch in much the same role as it played during Johnson's unsuccessful assaults on Hill 314.⁵¹ The neighboring ROK 1st Division would resume its attack to recapture the walled city of Kasan on Hill 902, due north of Hill 314.⁵²

In the meantime, the NKPA were not idle. During the latter part of 11 September and the early morning hours of 12 September, elements of the NKPA 19th Regiment, 13th Division and 2d Regiment, 1st Division reinforced the 1st Battalion, 19th Regiment already dug in on Hill 314. This reinforcement brought the total number of NKPA troops on Hill 314 to 700.⁵³ NKPA artillery and mortar fires increased in intensity during this period, registering on the southern approaches to Hill 314.⁵⁴ Unknown to the Americans, the NKPA 13th Division was girding itself for a hard-hitting, 12 September attack against the U.S. 5th

Infantry Regiment in the Bowling Alley east of Hill 314.⁵⁵

Upon receipt of his mission statement from COL Nist, Lynch immediately developed a plan and briefed his subordinate commanders.⁵⁶ The plan called for 3/7 Cav to conduct a two-phase operation: Phase 1 was the 0630 move up from the current battalion blocking position to an assembly area at the base of Hill 314; Phase 2 was the climb up the ridge toward the line of departure and the commencement of the attack no later than (NLT) 1100 on 12 September.⁵⁷ The battalion would attack with two companies abreast (Company L on the left and Company I on the right) and one company moving behind and centered on the lead companies, as battalion reserve (Company K).⁵⁸ Lynch intended to prep the objective with air strikes, artillery, and mortar fire. Heavy machineguns, recoilless rifles, and tanks would support by fire from the line of departure (LD).⁵⁹ Once the objective was secured, Companies I, L, and K would establish a battalion-size defensive perimeter and prepare for the inevitable NKPA counterattacks. Flame thrower teams made up from the battalion admin section would augment each company sector.⁵⁹ The battalion would consolidate its gains and "hold at all costs" as Hill 314 constituted "the key to the defense of Taegu."⁶⁰

Lynch also planned to use only the minimum essential communications and heavy weapons vehicles in the

attack. These vehicles would displace forward to the battalion assembly area before dawn. Lynch reasoned that this technique would aid in deceiving the NKPA to the place and time of the attack and would protect his vehicles from observation and direct fire. All supply vehicles were to remain in the blocking position until the attack commenced. Additionally, the supporting tank platoon would rendezvous with his vehicles in the battalion assembly area before daylight on 12 September.⁶¹

With the time of attack set by the regimental commander for 1100, Lynch backward planned to give his battalion plenty of time to move from the blocking position to the assembly area and then climb the ridge to the line of departure to initiate the attack. He opted to begin the two-mile foot movement from the blocking positions to the assembly area at 0630.⁶² The battalion would move in column formation, order of march Companies I, L, Headquarters, M, and K.⁶³ Lynch carefully planned the route of march to take maximum advantage of streambeds, irrigation ditches, and low lying areas to conceal his approach.⁶⁴ Heavy ground fog, so typical of warm September mornings in Korea, would add to the concealment of 3/7 Cav.⁶⁵ Once at the assembly area, Lynch would shift his battalion from its extended column formation into its V-shaped attack formation. The battalion would then begin its torturous two-hour climb up

the ridgeline under cover of residual morning haze and artillery fires and airstrikes.⁶⁶

Lynch and his battalion operations officer, CPT James B. Webel, designated specific control measures in order to coordinate ground maneuver with fire support. The control measures for the attack - in this case the line of departure, intermediate objectives, phase lines, and final objective - were drawn on the map to coincide with the four overtly identifiable knobs which were the essential features, and key military terrain, of Hill 314.

The battalion had to capture each of the four pieces of key terrain - the four knobs - in succession from south to north. Hill 314 could only be considered secure when the battalion had seized Knob 3, the last peak of the ridge, and controlled all intermediate knobs. Consequently, 3/7 Cav had to make the two-hour climb from the southern tip of Hill 314 to reach the Line of Departure (LD), sited on Knob 0 (the second peak south of the saddle on the ridgeline). At 1100 the battalion would move across the military crest of Knob 0 and, under artillery concentrations and airstrikes, commence the attack. Company M heavy machineguns and recoilless rifles would support the attack from the LD.⁶⁷

Continuing to climb, for 200 meters, with the lead assault Companies L and I moving, respectively, left and right of the spine of the ridge, 3/7 Cav would attack the NKPA outpost on Knob 1.⁶⁸ Phase line 1, drawn through

the northern tip of this knob, delineated the rear boundary of the battalion's first intermediate objective. Once Knob 1 was captured, the formation would descend into a saddle (40 meters in altitude) and then climb up and out of the saddle (160 meters in altitude) to attack the second intermediate objective, Knob 2. The actual distance travelled for this movement would be more than 700 meters.⁶⁹ Here at Knob 2 the battalion expected to meet heavy resistance as the bulk of the 700-man NKPA defense was anchored on this peak. Phase line 2 was drawn just behind Knob 2 to coordinate the battalion assault on the final objective, Knob 3.

"Once the hurdle of Knob 2 was passed,"⁷⁰ 3/7 Cav would have to fight its way through 500 meters of NKPA defenses to seize Knob 3. The battalion limit of advance, shown as Phase line 3, was penciled-in on the northern slope of Knob 3 at the point where the contour lines of Hill 314 begin to descend to the valley floor. With the capture of Knob 3, the battalion would consolidate into a three-company defensive perimeter and prepare for the anticipated night counterattacks by the NKPA. For bunker-clearing and as a potential deterrent to enemy probing attacks, Lynch task organized three flame thrower teams from soldiers of the 3/7 admin section and attached them to each rifle company.⁷¹ With these control measures and fire plans, Lynch felt confident he could accomplish his mission.⁷²

At first light on the morning of 12 September 1950, a heavy fog lay like a shroud over Hill 314 as LTC James H. Lynch ordered his battalion to begin its movement from the blocking positions to the assembly area at the base of Hill 314.⁷³ The first phase of the operation seemed to be proceeding as planned. The battalion's communications and mortar vehicles made the pre-dawn run to the assembly area without response from NKPA artillery.⁷⁴ The supporting tank platoon from Company C, 70th Tank Battalion arrived at the assembly area before daylight and linked up with Lynch's vehicles.⁷⁵ Lynch's 500-man column had made the first mile of the foot movement along the streams and irrigation ditches without incident. If good luck and the ground fog would hold out, the column would traverse the last mile of open low ground without interference from NKPA artillery observers.

At about 0700 Lynch saw his best laid plans flash before his eyes when a single flat trajectory concentration from a NKPA 76mm self-propelled gun straddled the battalion route of march.⁷⁶ No casualties occurred from the enemy fire and in the absence of any additional concentrations, the battalion continued its snake-like advance to the assembly area, with an appreciably quickened pace.⁷⁷

Companies I and L arrived at the battalion assembly area at 0800 without drawing additional NKPA attention.⁷⁸ "Somewhat ahead of schedule," these lead

companies quickly reconfigured into their respective assault formations and began the ascent to the line of departure.⁷⁹ Lynch and his scaled-down Tactical Operations Center (TOC) staff also moved rapidly through the assembly area and climbed the ridgeline behind Companies I and L.⁸⁰ At about 0950, high up on Knob 3, eleven Air Force F-51 aircraft spotted two exploding artillery white phosphorous marking rounds and, according to Lynch's plan, rocketed and strafed Hill 314 and dropped napalm cannisters for nearly forty-five minutes.⁸¹

By 1015, the 3/7 Cav command group and the two lead assault units had reached the line of departure at Knob 0. Much to his amazement, Lynch discovered that Company L of LTC Harold K. Johnson's 3/8 Cav had not yet withdrawn from Hill 314 and was manning positions astride Knob 0.⁸² Now that his proposed LD was defended, Lynch decided to take advantage of the unprogrammed security afforded by Company L to rapidly pass his battalion through these positions and proceed with the attack.⁸³ Establishing his TOC in the shallow dip that had been the site of the 3/8 Cav command post, Lynch ordered Companies M and K to hustle to the LD.⁸⁴ At 1018 the S-3, CPT Webel, had contacted the supporting tank platoon and it began to rumble forward through the assembly area and up the ridgeline, quickly catching up with the rear element of Company K.⁸⁵ All units were ahead of the time

schedule. To Lynch, the first phase of the operation was being executed to near perfection.⁸⁶

At 1030, as Company K and the tanks continued their climb to the line of departure, Lynch and his TOC staff turned their attention toward the coordination of preparatory fires for the 1100 attack. As they anxiously awaited the pre-planned artillery barrage that was scheduled to follow the airstrikes at 1030, Lynch was notified by regimental headquarters that the artillery mission had been cancelled due to ammunition shortage.⁸⁷ As partial compensation for the lost artillery support, 7th Cav Air Liaison Officers diverted a flight of four F-51's from Tabu-dong to Hill 314.⁸⁸ These aircraft arrived within minutes and began a thirty-minute rocket and napalm attack on Knobs 1, 2, and 3. The time it took to sort out the artillery dilemma now forced the 3/7 Cav 81mm mortars to delay their preparatory fires until the F-51's were out of the objective area. The ten-minute mortar prep, scheduled to be the last indirect fire concentration prior to the attack, was now set to commence at 1100.⁸⁹ Consequently, Lynch had no choice but to adjust the time of the attack to 1110.⁹⁰

At the same time Lynch and his staff were working out the fire support problem, the NKPA on Hill 314 gave indications that they were aware of the impending attack. Between 1030 and 1100 highly accurate NKPA 120-mm mortar fire rained in on the battalion assembly area at the base

of Hill 314. Apparently, the presence of the supporting tank platoon, not the airstrikes, alerted the NKPA to Lynch's attack.⁹¹ In spite of its accuracy, 3/7 Cav suffered only one casualty from the enemy mortar fire; virtually all of Lynch's units had moved out of the assembly area and onto the ridgeline, according to his instructions, just prior to the mortar attack.⁹²

Up on Hill 314, the NKPA moved into battle positions as the mortar fire impacted below. The potent 13th NKPA Division had reinforced the battered 1st NKPA Division on Hill 314 during the night and now the 700 defenders were organized for combat. Twelve to fifteen NKPA troops, armed with two machineguns and two automatic rifles, occupied an outpost at Knob 1. Over 400 NKPA troops now re-occupied log bunkers and foxholes along Knob 2 that they had vacated during the preparatory airstrikes. The remainder of the NKPA force returned to foxholes and bunkers around Knob 3 and just off either side of the spine of the ridge forward toward Knob 2. NKPA 50mm, 82mm, and 120mm mortar crews set up their guns in shallow depressions between Knob 3 and Knob 2, prepared to fire pre-registered concentrations on Knobs 0, 1, and 2.⁹³

Precisely at 1100 the 3/7 Cav mortars fired successive volleys of preparatory concentrations onto Knobs 1, 2, and 3.⁹⁴ From their positions at the line of departure, the four heavy machineguns of Company M

"laid down intense fire on the enemy outpost at Knob 1."⁹⁵ Lynch had installed a two-gun section on the left side of Knob 0 to support the advance of Company L and positioned the second section of heavy machineguns to the right of Knob 0 to fire in support of Company I. As the mortars and machineguns blazed away, the lead assault companies made their final formation adjustments prior to the attack.⁹⁶

At 1110 the mortars and machineguns lifted their supporting fires and Companies L and I crossed around Knob 0 in two parallel columns. On the left side of the ridgeline, Company L moved in column with 2d Platoon in the lead, followed in order by 1st and 3d Platoons. On the right side of the ridgeline, Company I moved with 3d Platoon in the lead, followed by 2d and 1st Platoons. Point men moved 100 meters ahead of each company formation.⁹⁷ LTC Lynch and his staff watched closely from the command post at Knob 0.⁹⁸

Almost immediately the assault companies come under heavy, but largely ineffective, small arms fire from the enemy outpost at Knob 1. In good order and with great speed, the leading platoons of each company conducted fire and maneuver and by 1130, Knob 1 was overrun.⁹⁹ All enemy soldiers were killed in the exchange except one, who somehow emerged unscathed and ran to warn the positions at Knob 2 of the American advance.¹⁰⁰ The assault companies paused momentarily to reorganize. The lead

platoons for the 150 meter movement to Knob 1 - 2d Platoon, Company L and 3d Platoon, Company I - were now positioned on each side of Knob 1 as supporting platoons for their respective companies. The platoons second in order of movement - 1st Platoon, Company L and 2d Platoon, Company I - temporarily assumed flank positions to secure the supporting platoons. The two trailing platoons of each company - 3d Platoon, Company L and 1st Platoon, Company I - moved through the supporting platoons to take up lead positions for the advance on Knob 2. Lastly, members of the supporting platoons cleared the foxholes and bunkers of Knob 1 of enemy dead, throwing the bodies out of the holes.¹⁰¹

As the assault companies were reorganizing, the NKPA reacted to the capture of Knob 1 with scattered small arms fire from Knob 2 and a pre-registered 120mm mortar salvo onto the line of departure and Knob 0.¹⁰² The 120mm mortar concentration wounded some of the Company L, 3/8 Cav troopers at Knob 0.¹⁰³ NKPA rifle fire into Knob 1 wounded the Company I radio operator and destroyed his radio.¹⁰⁴ Several walkie-talkies were also destroyed by the enemy rifle fire. Company I now had no radio communication with the battalion commander and no internal walkie-talkie communications with its platoons.¹⁰⁵ Within minutes, Company L also had its internal walkie-talkie net destroyed by NKPA sharpshooters.¹⁰⁶

Within five minutes of the capture of Knob 1, the companies jumped off for the assault on the heavily defended Knob 2. At the same time, 1st Platoon of the battalion reserve, Company K moved into Knob 1 to assume responsibility for its security.¹⁰⁷ The Company K weapons platoon, constituting a "mortar battery" made up of its own 60mm mortars and the mortars of Companies L and I, established a firing position behind Knob 0, outside of the bursting radius of the incoming NKPA mortar rounds.¹⁰⁸ The 2d and 3d Platoons of Company K inched closer to the line of departure but also stayed beyond the range of enemy indirect fires. LTC Lynch and his TOC staff escaped injury during the enemy retaliatory mortar strike on Knob 0 and continued to monitor the progress of the attack from the command post. Runners were dispatched forward to the assault companies to compensate for the interrupted radio net.¹⁰⁹

With the ridgeline acting as the boundary between them, Companies L and I began their descent into the saddle which led to Knob 2. The lead platoons of each company were configured in a V-shaped formation, with two squads forward in a skirmish line and third squad trailing in a modified wedge formation. The flanking platoons of each company, echeloned and extended slightly to the rear of the lead platoons, moved out in conjunction with the advance elements. As the lead platoons continued to move down into the saddle, the support platoons picked up from

Knob 1 and flared out and down over each side of the ridge. As the assault companies disappeared from his line of sight, Lynch displaced the 60mm mortar platoons of both companies forward to the rear of Knob 1.¹¹⁰

Shortly after the move-out from Knob 1, the Company L skirmish line began taking fire from what appeared to be NKPA outposts in the bottom left cut of the saddle.

Quickly returning fire, the skirmish squads flushed four NKPA soldiers from their concealed observation post.

Three of the soldiers made it safely back to Knob 2, but the fourth observer was killed. The time was 1138. Off on the right side of the ridgeline, the sweep squad from the Company I support platoon had likewise uncovered an enemy outpost. In a brisk, one-sided exchange of gunfire, the squad killed all members of the NKPA machinegun crew in their concealed outpost.¹¹¹

Swiftly moving through this tentative resistance, the commanders of Companies L and I got their units to the bottom of the saddle by 1143. Suddenly, the assault companies were hit by a vicious fusillade of NKPA automatic weapons fire and a well-placed bombardment of 50mm, 82mm, and 120mm mortar fires from Knob 2. The intensity of the fire-storm indicated that the two companies were astride the enemy's final protective fire line for Knob 2.¹¹² Both companies were able to continue to maneuver forward another two hundred meters to positions which not only moved them out of the mortar

fires but also placed them on the incline of the exit from the saddle. Here both companies were pinned down by another heavy eruption of NKPA small arms fire. The sheer weight of this fire briefly disorganized the lead platoons of both companies. In an attempt to re-establish order, 3d Platoon, Company L moved to its right and became intermingled with 1st Platoon, Company I. The conglomerate group continued to receive heavy fire from the dense underbrush to its front.¹¹³

Based on very incomplete radio reports from Company L and the observations of the weapons platoons on Knob 1, Lynch quickly called for the Company M 81mm mortars to fire an immediate suppression mission on top of Knob 2.¹¹⁴ The volume of fire from the saddle reverberated up the slopes, rolling over Knob 1 and engulfing Lynch and his staff at the LD. While Company M was priming the mortar charges, a group of about 400 NKPA were spotted on the left side of Knob 2, apparently preparing to counterattack into the saddle. Within minutes after initiating mortar fires on Knob 2, Company M adjusted rounds onto the mass of NKPA, dispersing the enemy.¹¹⁵

By 1145 the lead platoons of Companies L and I were able to return sufficient fire to force the NKPA in the underbrush to their front to withdraw to the reverse slopes of Knob 2.¹¹⁶ However, the enemy fires - particularly those of Browning Automatic Rifles (BARs) captured from the 8th Cav - further damaged radio and

walkie-talkie communications between the lead assault platoons and the company command posts vicinity Knob 1. "Authority to resume the attack" on Knob 2 now rested with the platoon leaders who were acting in the absence of orders from their company commanders.¹¹⁸ To their credit, the platoon leaders of 3d Platoon, Company L and 1st Platoon, Company I had managed to reorganize their units under cover of Lynch's counter-mortar fire, and at 1155 "the first assault" on Knob 2 was underway.¹¹⁹

Appraised of this development, Lynch displaced the Company M heavy machineguns forward to Knob 1 with directions to engage the enemy on Knob 2 while the attacking platoons advanced. The heavy machineguns fired a continuous arc of overhead fire as the two lead platoons and the two adjacent flank platoons fought their way up the steep slope to Knob 2. At 1200, Lynch received a report that elements of the 3d Platoon of Company L had succeeded in gaining the crest of Knob 2 and were pushing across Phase Line 2 toward Knob 3.¹²⁰

But the attack had actually been stopped cold by brutal enfilade fires from enemy positioned in the underbrush on 3d Platoon's left flank. As the 3d Platoon continued its forward movement it was hit by a strong enemy contingent which had shifted from its positions in front of Company I to the "nose" of Knob 2. Wicked small arms fire laced 3d Platoon as enemy grenades detonated at close range. Hand-to-hand combat broke out. 3d Platoon,

Company L moved back down the slope, shocked by the sudden counterattack.¹²¹

Artillery Forward Observers (FOs) with Company L immediately requested 77th Field Artillery Battalion - in direct support to 3/7 Cav - to fire Variable Time (VT)-fuzed 105mm rounds to pre-empt any NKPA exploitation of the repulse of the first assault.¹²² At the same time, Lynch directed a second 81mm mortar concentration on the northeast side of Knob 2 to further dissuade the NKPA from additional counterattacks.¹²³ As these fires were being adjusted, the commanders of Company L and I moved forward from Knob 1 to the location of 3d Platoon, Company L. Finding the troops "stunned", both began throwing fragmentation hand grenades into the underbrush as an example for the reeling soldiers of 3d Platoon. In a matter of minutes, 3d Platoon members were also throwing hand grenades, and this forced the dispersal of the remaining NKPA in the bushes on Knob 2. Immediately, the commander of Company L, in possession of the only operable radio, contacted Lynch and reported his unit had been decisively repulsed in its assault on Knob 2 and was now disorganized. Lynch directed him to refrain from resuming the attack and to have his men dig in as an airstrike had been requested.¹²⁴ About this time, Lynch had also managed to get the tank platoon into the action. At 1215 the tanks marked the airstrike target with white phosphorous rounds and continued to fire high explosive

rounds at Knob 2 and 3 where the aircraft made their approach.¹²⁵ Unfortunately, Lynch's airstrike did not impact on Knob 2. Instead, the F51's pasted Knob 3 and the northern slopes of Hill 314.¹²⁶

CPT Walker and 1LT Fields got their units reorganized during the errant airstrike so that by 1230 they began to move out on a second assault of Knob 2. During the reorganization, the 3d Platoon of Company I moved in behind the remnants of 3d Platoon, Company L, while 2d Platoon, Company L moved forward to take the lead in Company L.¹²⁷ For all intents and purposes, CPT Walker, the commander of Company L - the senior commander on the scene - assumed command of both companies to unify the maneuvers of the second assault.¹²⁸ His plan called for the 1st Platoon, Company L and the 1st Platoon, Company I to lead the advance up to Knob 2 and establish a base of fire while 2d Platoon, Company L worked around the left flank and the 2d Platoon, Company I worked around the right flank. As the attack kicked-off, the platoon leaders of 3d Platoon, Company L and 3d Platoon, Company I, were killed by mortar fire.¹²⁹

By 1245 both 1st Platoons had established a heavy base of fire against Knob 2 and both 2d Platoons had made their flanking movements. As enemy small arms and mortar fires began in earnest, Lynch, positioned at Knob 1, directed renewed 105mm and 155mm field artillery concentrations onto Knob 2. As the artillery fires

impacted, both 1st Platoons gained access to a revetment on Knob 2 called "the shallow". 2d Platoon, Company L, meanwhile, was struck by enemy 76mm self-propelled gun fires and withering small arms fires and grenades. Taking heavy casualties, the platoon was stopped in its tracks. On the right side of Knob 2, though, 2d Platoon, Company I had also reached the top of Knob 2 and had moved forward to secure the northern tip of Knob 2. Both company commanders took up positions in "the shallow", where the four-foot high stone walls of a Korean burial site afforded them the necessary protection to withstand the incoming NKPA 120mm mortar bombardment. Within minutes the entire assault force was pinned down by mortar fires which caused one casualty about every two minutes. Still, Lynch's troops were in tentative control of Knob 2 and had, for the first time, direct observation on the final objective, Knob 3.¹³¹

Once he was notified that the second assault had been "partially successful", Lynch rallied his fire support assets to secure his gains. The 9th and 77th Field Artillery Battalions fired an estimated 36 VT-fuzed rounds just to the north of Phase Line 2. Company M 81mm mortars worked feverishly to sustain a maximum rate of fire against Knob 2. Two additional artillery concentrations, adjusted by FO's positioned in "the shallow", prompted the NKPA to withdraw from Knob 2. Informed of the situation, Lynch directed his FO to

request an airstrike for 1330 to hasten the withdrawal of the enemy.¹³²

The situation confronting Lynch and 3/7 Cav was still urgent, and the success of the attack as still very much in doubt.¹³³ To his great dismay, the requested airstrike did not occur at 1330 and Lynch was forced to decide whether or not to leave his battalion in its exposed position on Knob 2 while the airstrike communications problem was solved. At about 1345 the enemy mortar fire decreased in intensity and became sporadic.¹³⁴ The assault companies stood fast, shooting at anything that moved north of "the shallow". Lynch opted to hold his battalion in position, apparently intending to consolidate on Knob 2 and establish a night defensive perimeter.¹³⁵

Shortly after 1410, Lynch's long-awaited close air support appeared over Hill 314.¹³⁶ For fifteen minutes the three F51 aircraft dropped napalm and general-purpose bombs and rocketed and strafed the hill. Flying unusually low, the planes began strafing the ridgeline with .50 caliber fires a mere 75 meters beyond "the shallow" where the assault element commanders and FO's were positioned.¹³⁷ Two napalm cannisters blasted almost directly on top of a large group of NKPA who had taken cover in the brush just beneath Knob 3.¹³⁸ The NKPA in the vicinity of Knob 3 dispersed in disorganization and began to flee down the slopes of Hill 314. Enemy mortar

fires decreased sharply and the assault companies on the crest of Knob 2 were taking only occasional small arms fire. By all appearances, the avenue of approach along the ridgeline to Knob 3 was generally free of NKPA.¹³⁹ Watching from his command post at Knob 1, Lynch observed that enemy resistance was crumbling.¹⁴⁰ Reports passed from Knob 2 through the fire support radio net confirmed Lynch's assessment.¹⁴¹ Sensing that the most decisive point of the battle at hand, Lynch ordered CPT Walker of Company L to assault Knob 3 at 1430.¹⁴²

Immediately after the airstrike, CPT Walker gave the signal to attack. When the troops on Knob 2 did not instantly respond, CPT Walker began to "lead the charge" himself, closely followed by the commander of Company I and about a dozen other soldiers.¹⁴³ By the force of his example and energy, CPT Walker got the assault troops moving. After enduring horrendous mortar bombardments and incessant automatic weapons fire while they awaited the airstrike, the troops swept up over the crest of Knob 2 in "a moment of emotional release."¹⁴⁴ Lynch could hear the yelling of the assault troops back at Knob 1.¹⁴⁵

The assault companies "continued to advance along the ridgeline at a moderate, steady pace."¹⁴⁶ At 1500 Lynch ordered the Company M jeep-mounted recoilless rifles forward to Knob 2 along with the battalion reserve, Company K.¹⁴⁷ As these units passed over Knob 1, Lynch displaced his battalion command post forward to Knob 2 for

a better view of the attack on Knob 3.¹⁴⁸ From Hill 570, west of Hill 314, NKPA 76mm self-propelled gun fires and automatic weapons fires impacted among the Company L assault elements. Advanced units of Company L shifted to the right side of the ridgeline to avoid these fires while continuing forward.¹⁴⁹ NKPA mortar fires started up again in response to the assault, but almost all concentrations landed on Knob 2 and caused significant casualties to the recently arrived Company K.¹⁵⁰

At 1530, Lynch saw the lead elements of the assault companies climb up over Knob 3.¹⁵¹ NKPA troops were "slipping down the slopes in all directions" in their haste to evacuate Hill 314.¹⁵² The NKPA 82mm mortars at the base of the north slope of Hill 314 had been abandoned by the enemy, but 120mm and 60mm mortar fires from Hill 570 continued to cause casualties as 3/7 Cav moved between Knob 2 and Knob 3. Around 1540, Lynch directed Companies I, L, and K to consolidate into a defensive perimeter atop Knob 3. Concurrently, he requested an artillery concentration onto the escaping NKPA.¹⁵³ Lynch then moved his battalion command post up to the northeast side of Knob 3.¹⁵⁴

By 1545, a lull had set in over Hill 314. As his assault companies reorganized and accounted for personnel, Lynch took stock of the situation. Although his battalion had suffered 229 casualties in about five hours of fighting, it nevertheless captured a regimental-size NKPA

position which had withstood three previous attacks by U.S. battalions.¹⁵⁶ The mission had been accomplished in a minimum of time because of the unrelenting aggressiveness and skill of 3/7 Cav. His battalion and all supporting arms had inflicted nearly 900 casualties on the NKPA 1st and 13th Divisions.¹⁵⁷

LTC James H. Lynch had much to be proud of: his battalion had achieved a spectacular success in its second combat mission. 3d Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment was no longer a "green" battalion - the troops were now combat veterans. With this in mind, Lynch radioed his assessment of the situation to higher headquarters. Calling directly to the G-3, 1st Cav Division, at 1545, Lynch, in classic understatement, reported that "Objective hill-ours."¹⁵⁸

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COMMUNICATIONS			
BE A GOOD LISTENER	1	1	
COMMUNICATE INTENT CLEARLY	4	4	
COMMUNICATE NONVERBALLY	4	1	
COMMUNICATE ENTHUSIASM	3	1	
COMMUNICATE ORDERS CLEARLY	4	4	
COMMUNICATE STANDARDS	4	2	
COMMUNICATE UP, DOWN, HORIZONTALLY	4	2	
OBTAIN FEEDBACK	1	1	
STRESS SIMPLICITY	4	4	

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
SUPERVISE			
COMMAND FORWARD	3	4	
DON'T OVER- SUPERVISE	3	4	
ENFORCE SAFETY STANDARDS	0	0	
ESTABLISH CONTROLS	2	3	
ESTABLISH/ ENFORCE STANDARDS	0	0	
FOLLOW-UP ON CORRECTIVE ACTION	0	0	
PROVIDE FEEDBACK	0	1	

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER TEACH. AND COUNSELING	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COACH/COUNSEL SUBORDINATES	3	1	
DEMAND ACTION	3	4	
DEVELOP SUBORDINATES	3	1	
TEACH SKILLS	1	1	
TRAIN FOR WAR	1	1	
USE AWARDS AND DISCIPLINE SYSTEM	4	0	

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
ACCEPT HONEST MISTAKES	1	1	
BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE UNIT	4	3	
CREATE STRONG UNIT IDENTITY	4	3	
DEMONSTRATE CARING	3	1	
DENONS. TRUST	4	4	
DEVELOP COOP. AND TEAMWORK	1	4	
DEVELOP SUBORD. TO REPLACE YOU	1	1	
SHOW CONFIDENCE IN SELF/TEAM	4	3	
ENCOURAGE BOLDNESS	4	4	
ENCOURAGE CANDOR	4	4	

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
ENCOURAGE			
SPEEDY ACTION	4	4	
GENERATE UNIT COHESION	4	3	
INCLUDE SUBORD. LEADERS IN DECISION-MAKING	1	1	
INSTILL DESIRE	4	4	
PROVIDE TOUGH, REPETITIVE, EXACTING TNG.	4	1	
TRAIN LEADER TEAMS	1	1	

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER TECH. / TACTICAL PROFICIENCY	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
APPLY TENETS OF AIRLAND BATTLE DOCTRINE	4	3	
IMPLEMENT THE AIRLAND BATTLE IMPERATIVES	4	2	
EMPLOY BATTLEFIELD OPERATING SYSTEMS	4	3	

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
DECISION- MAKING			
ACCEPT PRUDENT RISKS IN SUBORD.	4	4	
BE ASSERTIVE	4	3	
BE CREATIVE	4	2	
DELEGATE AUTH./ MATCH RESPONDS.	4	4	
IMPLEMENT PLAN	4	4	
IMPROVISE	4	2	
INCLUDE ALL LEADERS IN DECISION-MAKING	1	1	
TAKE APPROP. ACTION IN THE ABSENCE/ORDERS	4	1	
TAKE CALCULATED RISKS	4	3	
TAKE DECISIVE ACTION	4	4	

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER DECISION- MAKING	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
	4	4	
USE AND EXPECT GOOD JUDGMENT			

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
PLANNING			
ADJUST ACCORD. TO SITUATION	1	2	
BE ADAPTABLE	3	2	
ESTABLISH CLEAR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4	4	
ESTABLISH SENSE COMMON PURPOSE FOR THE UNIT	4	4	
ESTABLISH COURSES OF ACTION TO MEET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4	3	
ORGANIZE	4	4	
PLAN BEYOND INITIAL OPS.	1	1	

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER USE AVAILABLE SYSTEMS	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
APPROPRIATELY FILTER INFO. TO SUBORDINATES	0	0	
ACTIVELY SEEK NEEDED INFO.	0	0	
MANAGE RESOURCES (TIME, PEOPLE, INFO., THINGS)	0	0	

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER PROFESS. ETHICS	LTC		
	VANDERVOORT	LYNCH	MOORE
ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY	4	4	
BE ROLE MODEL	4	4	
BE CANDID	4	1	
BE PHYSICALLY FIT	4	1	
DEMONSTRATE BEARING	3	4	
DEMONSTRATE COMPASSION	4	1	
DEMONSTRATE COURAGE	4	4	
DEMONSTRATE INTEGRITY	4	4	
DEMONSTRATE MATURITY	4	4	
DEMONSTRATE SELF-DISCIPLINE	4	1	

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER PROFESS. ETHICS	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
DEVELOP THE PROFESSIONAL ARMY ETHIC IN SUBORDINATES	1	1	
DEMONSTRATE SELFLESSNESS	4	1	

Analysis and Conclusions

"The recapture of Hill 314 on 12 September 1950", according to one author, "would prove to be the turning point in the battle to save Taegu."¹⁵⁹ Another analyst called the capture of Hill 314 by 3/7 Cav "the key action" in which U.S. forces "seized (and then were in a position to hold) the tactical initiative" and turn the tide of the battle.¹⁶⁰ The 3/7 Cav victory, which brought them a well deserved Presidential Unit Citation, "inspired others."¹⁶¹ For his superior leadership in "the brilliantly planned and executed attack on 12 September," LTC Lynch was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.¹⁶² Undeniably, the performance of LTC Lynch and 3/7 Cav on Hill 314 was a dramatic turn-around from their previously dismal combat debut. What did LTC Lynch do to 3/7 Cav to make it so courageous that it relentlessly drove up the steep approaches of Hill 314 and violently dislodged a superior enemy force? How did he keep his battalion going after it has absorbed such terrific punishment? What skills of command of a a battalion in combat are evident in Lynch's performance on Hill 314? What skills, knowledge, and attitudes can future combat battalion commanders take away from an examination of Lynch's performance to develop their own combat leadership performance indicators?

COMMUNICATIONS

Given the depth of the combat narrative, it is especially difficult to pinpoint the degree of LTC Lynch's communications competency during the fight for Hill 314. Consequently, virtually every task, supporting SKA, and performance indicator must be liberally interpreted from the sequence of events.

While there is no evidence to suggest that LTC Lynch was a Good Listener, it is relatively apparent that he was especially capable of Clearly Communicating His Intent and Clearly Communicating His Orders. Lynch had issued a fragmentary order to his major subordinate commanders after receiving his mission from COL Nist, the regimental commander. Although there was not a great deal of time until he planned to execute his 0630 Phase I movement to the base of Hill 314, Lynch seems to have relied on sound doctrinal formulation of his orders to insure that his subordinates understood the actions necessary to accomplish the mission. The smooth movement of the battalion from its blocking positions to the assembly area at the base of Hill 314 bears this out. The actions of CPT Walker, commander of Company L, during the attack, when communications were interrupted, is a perfect example of how well Lynch had Communicated Intent.

How well Lynch Communicated Nonverbally is hard to assess but accounts state that his decision to locate his command post at exposed positions during the course of the

battle greatly enhanced the morale of the battalion. His actions complemented/reinforced the unit standards he felt were vital to successful accomplishment of the mission. He demonstrated a sense of urgency without panic by displacing his CP forward during the most intensive periods of action. In this way he clearly Communicated Standards of leader performance on the battlefield. The assault company commanders apparently picked up on this nonverbal communication as is evidenced in their personal gallantry on Knob 2.

At first glance, Lynch does not appear to have done well in his requirement to Communicate Up, Down, and Horizontally. Beginning with pre-mission planning and coordination, Lynch and his staff failed to make the most of 3d Battalion, 8th Cav's attempts to take the objective. Sources do not mention any interface between LTC Lynch and the 3/8 Cav commander, LTC Harold K. Johnson. Nor is there mention of inter-staff liaison. This communications failure would therefore account for the "discovery" of Company L, 3/8 Cav at the LD.

Also, Lynch and his staff do not score well in their coordinations for fire support. The 3/8 Cav 4.2 inch mortar platoon remained completely out of action during the battle even though it was in position to support 3/7 Cav and seemingly alerted to do so. The platoon of tanks from the 77th Tank Battalion was significantly under-utilized - another offshoot of

incomplete communications. Other than acting as a radio relay to the battalion rear and marking airstrike targets with WP rounds, the tank platoon and its leader languished for most of the battle without instructions from the staff.

Looking at the communications competency from a purely technical standpoint, it was extremely fortunate for Lynch that his plan and intent were so well known by subordinates that the loss of radio and walkie-talkie communication did not hamper the attack. This could have resulted in a major problem for the assault companies. Indeed, the loss of effective electronic communications nearly doomed the battalion when it was struck by the NKPA counterattack at Knob 2. The inability of either assault commander to make a timely request for an airstrike - except through the already heavily over-burdened fire support net - was very nearly cataclysmic to the exposed units. The dilemma was then compounded by the failure of the staff to process the airstrike request. By the time the close air support arrived on station, the assault companies were hanging on by a thread, disorganized and battered by NKPA mortar fires and "banzai" counterattacks. Fortunately, the airstrike "came in right over the deck" and was decisively effective in turning back the NKPA from Knob 2.

The outstanding lesson to be learned from this episode is that future battalion commanders must make a

concerted effort to ensure combat communications are working before attacks, during attacks, and that the communications plan stipulates an appropriate back-up scheme to redress combat losses. NTC and JRTC after-action reports indicate that many battalions begin an engagement with the erroneous assumption that communications will remain intact throughout the operation. Certainly, no commander can possibly envision every conceivable contingency, but when viewed hand-in-hand with leader location on the battlefield, subordinate knowledge of intent and initiative, and simplicity of plans and rapidity of response to unexpected developments, effective communications in combat assumes an enormous significance. Effective combat communications is fundamental to the essential application of the battlefield operating system command, control, and communication.

Next, Lynch is not described as having effective, continuous communications with his immediate superior, COL Nist. Robert Best in The Structure of a Battle remarks that daily operational journals of the 7th Cavalry Regiment contain few entries pertaining to Lynch and 3/7 Cav. COL Nist is recorded as having had only one dialogue with Lynch, and that was logged as having occurred just prior to Lynch's order to attack Knob 3. By the same token, there is no mention of the 7th Cav Regiment commander making a visit to Lynch's command post during

the battle. In the absence of solid empirical data, it is reasonable to assume at this point that the communications link - both technical and personal - between Lynch and his regimental commander was seriously flawed. In complete contrast to this is the extremely professional communications enjoyed by Lynch and LTC William A. Harris, appointed to command 7th Cav Regiment when Nist was relieved by MG Gay just a few days before Lynch's second DSC-winning performance. Although the weakness of the Lynch-Nist communications link had no adverse impact on the conduct of the fighting on Hill 314, it is likewise reasonable to believe that it could have had detrimental affect on the course of the battle had the situation turned sour for 3/7 Cav. For future battalion commanders in combat, the Lynch-Nist relationship serves as a reminder that the battalion must request information from superiors, maintain open communications with superiors, and keep superiors informed.

Lastly, Lynch Stressed Simplicity during the battle for Hill 314. He kept his concept of the operation and scheme of maneuver especially simple and basically fool-proof. He was able to do so because his battalion was well-versed on the doctrinal fundamentals of light infantry combat; the fact that his battalion was a tactical demonstration unit for the Infantry School gave Lynch a tremendous advantage on Hill 314. There is ample evidence to point out that his subordinate leaders fully

understood the mission and his supplemental instructions during the course of the fighting. By keeping the plan to an elementary and fundamental level of simplicity, Lynch reinforced the capability of his subordinate units to react to unforeseen circumstances with their initiative and within his intent.

The salient feature of Lynch's plan of attack and the subsequent execution of that plan is virtually axiomatic: simple plans, well-grounded in the fundamentals, facilitate simple solutions to tactical problems on a complex battlefield (conversely, complex plans tends to require complex solutions). Simplicity gives the combat commander the much-sought-after flexibility required for success on the battlefield.

A case may be made that Lynch simplified his combat orders by Defining Success for his subordinates: capture Hill 314. The actions of CPT Walker, commander of Company L, clearly show that the assault commander knew what end-state needed to be achieved to meet the battalion commander's definition of success. The relative ease in which NCO's assumed command of platoons and continued the mission also indicates an understanding of the mission and intent two echelons below the battalion commander.

SUPERVISE

Lynch achieved success in his mission not only because he had rebuilt his soldier teams but because he had effectively supervised his subordinates. He did so

primarily by Commanding Forward, by Not Over-Supervising, and by Establishing Controls.

In Commanding Forward, Lynch placed his command post where he could best observe the battle and, if required, influence the action. He moved near the head of the battalion column as it approached Hill 314. He kept his TOC close to the assault companies as they began the two-hour climb up the ridgeline to the LD. He subsequently displaced his command post to exposed, forward locations during the critical stages of the battle. Minutes after Knob 3 was secure, Lynch was there.

Lynch Did Not Over-Supervise his subordinate commanders. Once the attack was underway he demonstrated trust and confidence in the abilities of his subordinates by giving mission-type orders. Considering the tenuous state of morale and technical competence of the battalion, Lynch was taking a substantial calculated risk by conducting the battle in this manner. But 3/7 Cav had to prove to itself and the rest of the 1st Cav Division that it could fight. Lynch had decided to supervise the attack in a way that would concurrently reinforce soldier team development and accomplish the mission. He kept the plan simple, set the ultimate goals, clearly defined success, and then positioned himself where he could overwatch as his subordinate commanders took charge and employed tactics, techniques, and procedures.

When the situation became critical below Knob 2, and the battalion was in a desperate position, Lynch resisted the temptation to micromanage the action. From his command post on Knob 1, Lynch was more involved in coordinating resources for the ground maneuver elements - in this case mortar, artillery, and close air support - than in issuing instructions to the company commanders. Though supporting evidence is not adequately detailed, Lynch seems to have delegated authority to CPT Walker to sort-out the confusion and resume the attack, on Walker's command, after the battalion stymied the NKPA counterattack below Knob 2. Even though Lynch was toying with the idea that the battalion might not be successful in seizing Hill 314, and would have to stop after taking just Knob 2, he kept his faith in his subordinates. This is a prominent example of Lynch's tenacity, moral courage, and ability to effectively supervise subordinates.

Lynch effectively supervised his subordinates on Hill 314. He Established Controls, or parameters, within which his commanders were to operate. As has been mentioned, Lynch used a level of control that did not hinder the appropriate flexibility, innovation, or initiative of his subordinates. The actions of CPT Walker and the commander of Company I, LT Fields, clearly show that Lynch had articulated operative boundaries to his assault leaders. Inside these boundaries the company commanders could exercise initiative and were free to

innovate as long as their actions were conditional to Lynch's definition of success and were within his intent. It must be remembered that the mission, enemy dispositions, terrain, status of friendly troops, and time (METT-T) pretty much confined the subordinate commanders to operations within a long, narrow, undulating "sand-box" on Hill 314. Of course, this all played into Lynch's plan to conduct a simple, successful attack to boost the confidence of the battalion.

While the unforgiving cost of mistakes and unsafe acts in combat must always be addressed, the leadership performance indicators describing Enforce Safety Standards do not seem to take into account the real tactical measures of combat safety. In assessing how well LTC Lynch enforced safety on Hill 314, it is more appropriate to examine "fire control measures", command and control of direct and indirect fires and close air support," and "protection of troops". The real questions at hand are whether or not fratricide occurred on Hill 314 or whether or not Lynch - or any of his subordinates - failed to take adequate steps to insure the protection of friendly troops from enemy direct and indirect fires. These questions are extremely important in combat and in training exercises; "Protection" is one of the dynamics of combat power of AirLand Battle Doctrine outlined in FM 100-5, Operations.

Did Lynch enforce safety on Hill 314, in the terms which it has just been described? First of all, there is

no evidence to suggest that fratricide occurred on Hill 314. The emplacement of the Company M heavy machineguns, echeloned left and right on the LD to cover the advancing companies with overhead fire, did not produce friendly casualties. Nor did the aggregate 60mm "mortar battery" or the battalion 81mm mortar platoon wound friendly troops. No 3/7 Cav soldiers are recorded as having been killed or wounded by artillery fires or tactical airstrikes. Therefore, Lynch scores well on his ability to establish adequate fire control measures and command and control direct and indirect fires and close air support. Lastly, under protection of troops, the terrain on Hill 314 is important to the assessment. Given the barren nature of the knobs, and the fact that 3/7 Cav troops had to move astride the open, exposed spine of the ridgeline, the best that Lynch could do in the circumstances was protect his troops by launching counter-battery fires on NKPA mortars and by directing airstrikes to suppress NKPA machineguns. Without a doubt, had Lynch failed to employ these techniques his troops would not have been protected as well as they were and the attack would have failed.

TEACHING AND COUNSELING

Did LTC Lynch coach and counsel subordinate leaders during the fight for Hill 314?

Probably the most fair answer to this question is that Lynch did some coaching and counseling in the hours

before the battalion movement toward Hill 314. Although it may be inferred that Lynch "coached" CPT Walker during the critical firefight for Knob 2, no other examples of "coaching" of subordinates are evident. As in the Vandervoort assessment, the depth of evidence precludes sound judgement on coaching and counseling during combat.

In his relentless drive to capture Hill 314, Lynch most certainly Demanded Action. When success was not achieved he Required Corrective Action by subordinates so that he could continue to press the fight against the NKPA and maintain the momentum of the attack. Lynch seems to have been positive in his demands for action, not negative; he seems to have taken care to insure that subordinate initiative was expected and rewarded in order to meet his goal of achieving soldier team development as a product of a successful attack.

As has been frequently addressed, Lynch saw the attack on Hill 314 as an important opportunity to Develop Subordinates. The attack had to succeed because the battalion had yet to establish a combat performance success standard. Accomplishment of the Hill 314 mission would provide the battalion with the purest form of feedback on their tactical competency, morale, and leadership.

Teach Skills and Train for War are SKA with a pre-combat orientation, but it is apparent that Lynch had done the right things to enable his battalion to succeed

in combat. Although the training experiences of his battalion are not examined in this study, it is important to note that Lynch's reliance on the fundamentals of light infantry tactics - the "blocking and tackling" of combat - was instrumental to his eventual success on Hill 314. When a "team" fails to execute the fundamentals to standard, the advantage shifts to the team who does, and the "contest" is "lost". This is an analogy that should not be lost on future battalion commanders.

SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT

The real story behind the success of 3/7 Cav on Hill 314 lies in the dramatic soldier team development which occurred between the battalion's failed first mission and 12 September attack. The architect of that effective soldier team-building was LTC James H. Lynch.

No commander wants to go into combat for the first time and suffer defeat or failure. But when failure or mistakes occur, there is no more critical time for the battalion commander to exert a positive, caring, and trusting influence on the unit. The commander must quickly move in and use the mistake or failure as a developmental vehicle to rebuild the confidence, cohesion, morale, and competence of the unit. It is the toughest job of the combat leader.

LTC James H. Lynch seems to have performed that most difficult of leader tasks to near perfection. Although the source material does not provide the details

of the "rebuilding" of 3/7 Cav after its unsuccessful debut in combat, an interpretation of several of his actions just prior to and during the battle for Hill 314 provides prominent clues to the extent of his soldier team rebuilding effort.

As has been frequently stated thus far in the analysis, Lynch seems to have placed a premium on sound fundamentals and doctrinal warfighting. He appears to have returned to the fundamentals and the basic tactical doctrine to develop his soldier teams. He used a simple plan, with the successive knobs and phase lines acting as incremental, logical mini-objectives, as a vehicle in which he could insure at least partial success of the attack. He used his entire battalion to assault each knob to create a strong unit focus toward each progressive stage of the attack. This technique fostered unit/team integrity and gave all leaders and teams a common goal. He then enabled his subordinate commanders to take the initiative, operate independently, and innovate within his intent while he remained in a position close to the action to overwatch his unit. As much as possible, Lynch was Demonstrating Trust in his subordinates, displaying confidence in his unit, and Encouraging Boldness, Initiative, Innovation, and Speedy Action.

It seems that the scope of Lynch's deliberate techniques for soldier team development was intentionally small and simple because he believed that the "return to

the basics" approach would Generate Unit Cohesion, Instill Desire and result in success. His scheme worked, and "the emotional release" of the battalion when it attacked toward Knob 3 was a prominent indicator that he had given his battalion the means to develop itself and achieve the success it so desperately needed. The extent to which Lynch was successful in rebuilding his soldier teams is manifest in his battalion's performance ten days later, for which it was awarded a second Presidential Unit Citation.

TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL COMPETENCY

LTC James H. Lynch conducted a successful combat operation on Hill 314. His "brilliantly planned and executed attack" is especially instructive when analyzed in terms of AirLand Battle Doctrine.

Lynch achieved success on Hill 314 because he Applied the Tenets of the AirLand Battle Doctrine to the battlefield. In comparison to Vandervoort's initiative, agility, depth, and synchronization at St. Mere-Eglise, Lynch's Application of the Tenets of AirLand Battle Doctrine is more modest and understated. But the difference between these two cases lies in the foundation of every tactical situation - the factors of METT-T. While there may be similarities between two tactical scenarios, no two situations are exactly alike. Consequently, every situation must be sized up according to its own merits - the factors of METT-T - and the commander must apply his tactics to the circumstances.

Basically, Lynch was faced with a fairly straight-forward situation where there was little call for finesse or innovation at the battalion-level and great demand for action along a narrow corridor of compressed frontage. Lynch had to conduct a daylight frontal attack straight against a well-entrenched enemy of superior strength. This must be taken into account when the analysis of Lynch's application of the tenets and imperatives of AirLand Battle reveals something less than an overwhelming demonstration of maneuver warfare.

LTC Lynch demonstrated initiative during the battle for Hill 314 primarily by judicious planning and violent execution of the attack. Opting to keep the bulk of his vehicles at the blocking positions, and to send the required mortar and recoilless rifle jeeps forward before dawn, Lynch took the initiative which virtually guaranteed an unopposed battalion foot movement to Hill 314. He took the initiative and used a "V"-shaped formation in the assault which was a departure from the formation used by 3/8 Cav in the previously unsuccessful attacks. Most importantly, Lynch gained and maintained the initiative on Hill 314 from the beginning of the attack to the end of the fight for Knob 3. Considering the enemy situation and the state of his battalion, controlling the tactical initiative was a tremendous achievement.

Lynch does not demonstrate remarkable agility on Hill 314 unless the collective abilities of his assault echelons to reconfigure themselves for renewed attacks and Lynch's own performance in orchestrating fire support are taken into consideration. Again, there was no gradiose maneuvering taking place on Hill 314. Lynch, not unlike a boxer in the opening rounds of the bout, was going for a "knockout": he landed two strong "jabs" against the NKPA at Knobs 1 and 2 and then delivered a "combination" on Knob 3 which "knocked" the NKPA "out of the ring".

Lynch did not have much depth in his operation on Hill 314. Aside from his airstrikes, which may fit the category of vertical depth, the entire battle for Hill 314 was confined to the hill mass itself. No fire support assets ranged beyond 600 meters from friendly positions; in fact, the bulk of the napalm, mortar rounds, and artillery rounds were adjusted well inside minimum safe distance to 3/7 Cav soldiers.

Lynch was also somewhat weak in synchronizing available combat power against the NKPA. The communications breakdown, which caused a late request for an airstrike, nearly doomed the battalion at Knob 2. Lynch could have employed the 3/8 Cav 4.2 inch mortar platoon at this critical time but he and/or his staff had not affected complete coordinations for their support. Likewise, the platoon of tanks from the 77th Tank Battalion could have been used in a direct-fire mode

against Knob 2, but remained mal-utilized for most of the battle.

Because of the situation at Hill 314 confronting Lynch, the analysis of the Implementation of AirLand Battle Imperatives is not dynamic. There is no question that Lynch insured unity of effort during the battle, and that he provided purpose, direction, and motivation to his battalion to facilitate success. He set the example by leading from the front and emplacing his command post at critical, and exposed, locations on the battlefield. His plan and his instructions to subordinates were deliberately simple.

By fighting to gain, and then stubbornly maintain the initiative, Lynch seems to have done virtually all that he could to to anticipate events on the battlefield. He knew from the beginning that the NKPA had been reinforced on Hill 314 and he anticipated a tough fight to dislodge them. As a result, he anticipated the need for heavy artillery, tank, and close air support, plus the requirement to get the battalion to the base of Hill 314 without getting chopped to pieces.

Lynch concentrated his combat power against enemy vulnerabilities through the use of deception, a sound tactical formation, and decisive fire support assets. Lynch was outnumbered when he climbed Hill 314, but his "V"-shaped formation, which maintained pressure against the NKPA and restricted their maneuver, and his

application of indirect fires, and airstrikes, gave him the advantage. And once he gained the initiative over the NKPA, he had gained an additional, and decisive, combat multiplier.

Lynch really did very little, according to source material, in terms of designating, sustaining, and shifting the main effort during the attack. This imperative was applied almost exclusively by the assault companies when they reorganize for the successive attacks on each knob. Other than continuously applying indirect fire to increase his combat power advantage and suppress the enemy, and move the battalion reserve closer to the action, Lynch kept the same units as his main effort throughout the course of the five-hour battle. This seems to have been a conscious move on Lynch's part to stay with the basic plan while pressing the fight with his two assault companies.

Lynch must be credited with accomplishing his mission in minimal time and with violent execution of his plan. To defeat the enemy in five hours, and inflict 900 casualties, Lynch most certainly had to move fast, strike hard, and finish rapidly. That's what makes the accomplishment of Lynch and 3/7 Cav all the more outstanding. To achieve this decisive victory Lynch made the most of terrain, weather, deception, and OPSEC. He kept the signs of the impending attack to a bare minimum, and convinced the NKPA that his movement to Hill 314 was

no different than 8th Cav traffic in that direction. Until the LD was crossed, Lynch had succeeded in deceiving the NKPA as to the true nature of his movements on Hill 314. His preparatory fires fit into the deception story because they were not significantly different from the static defensive concentrations fired by 3/8 Cav earlier in the week.

Lynch used the terrain by his advantage by initially moving his battalion in column along a twisting two-mile route that took advantage of all available cover and concealment between his blocking positions and Hill 314. He moved his battalion just after dawn to make use of the heavy ground fog to obscure his march from NKPA observation. His attack time was also calculated to coincide with the time that the fog normally lifted, thereby insuring that close air support would be employed. He used the terrain to structure his incremental attack plan so that each knob was seized in succession to afford the battalion key terrain from which to proceed toward the final objective.

Lynch conserved strength for decisive action by withholding the employment of his reserve company and by using the employment of combined arms and sister services to off-set his manpower disadvantage. Though his synchronization of mortars, artillery, tanks, and tactical air was not the model of perfection, it was decisive. The well placed airstrike near "the shallow" on Knob 2 broke

the back of the NKPA resistance and Lynch rapidly exploited the opportunity with an attack on Knob 3.

Finally, there is no denying the fact that Lynch completely understood the effects of battle on soldiers, units, and leaders. The narrative of LTC James H. Lynch in the battle of Hill 314 is really the validation of this imperative.

In three weeks of combat in September, 1950, LTC James H. Lynch led his battalion to two Presidential Unit Citations and was awarded two Distinguished Service Crosses. This is a record of continuous combat operations worthy of emulation by future light infantry battalion commanders.

DECISION MAKING

Because he had a simple plan, Lynch was able to make sound, timely decisions at the lowest practical level on Hill 314. Positioned well-forward in order to observe the decisive action, Lynch was able to accept prudent risks in subordinates and allow his subordinates to take the initiative when appropriate and make logical decisions to accomplish the mission for which they are responsible. CPT Walker took the initiative and assumed command of both assault companies and ordered a second assault on Knob 2. He also made independent decisions in rearranging combat power for the second assault on Knob 2, and Lynch accepted these decisions because they were within his (the commander's) intent.

Lynch was an assertive leader on Hill 314. He was relentless in his tactics to capture Hill 314 and this assertiveness was emulated by the subordinate leaders of 3/7 Cav. He decisively took action and ordered renewed assaults or requested timely fire support to reinforce the attacks on Knobs 2 and 3. Though 30 minutes late, his airstrike just beyond "the shallow" of Knob 2 turned the tide of the battle and enabled Walker to push the assault echelons onto Knob 3. He demonstrated the moral courage to stand by his convictions when he made the tough decision to drive on to Knob 2 even though the battalion had to withstand heavy mortar fires and took many casualties. He demonstrated audacity (daring) first by attacking an enemy regiment on Hill 314 and then by never letting-up in his efforts to push the NKPA off the objective.

Lynch relied heavily on the fundamentals of tactical doctrine in his planning and execution of his attack but he also was creative in his minor tactics. Instead of attacking as 3/8 Cav had done with a battalion column formation, Lynch used a battalion "V" formation, with a two company-level assault echelon. Whereas 3/8 Cav had the combat power of just one company advancing along the ridgeline, Lynch's formation gave him the combat power, flexibility and security of two companies moving on a wide frontage on either side of the ridgeline. At large, the attack was necessarily a frontal attack against

a well-entrenched, superior enemy force. The reason Lynch did not attempt a flanking maneuver to the east or west of Hill 314 - a really creative plan - must be attributed to the fact that the NKPA held Hills 570 and 660, which flanked Hill 314 to the east and west, respectively, and to the basic consideration that Lynch was commanding a battalion that was not yet prepared to conduct a sophisticated infiltration and flanking maneuver in the face of the enemy. In the final analysis, Lynch Implemented a Plan that was simple, effective, and took into account the limitations and capabilities of his battlion.

Lynch does not stand out as a creative, innovative commander during the action on Hill 314, but it is abundantly evident that he Used and Expected Good Judgement and that he positioned himself to make responsible decisions. Throughout the battle Lynch made decisions which eventually resulted in the successful defense of Taegu. He seems to have done so largely on his own, without guidance from COL Nist.

PLANNING

As has already been mentioned, Lynch's success on Hill 314 shows that he planned effectively. What makes LTC Lynch's plan, so notable is that he really was not required to Adjust His Plan According to the Situation after the attack commenced. He had Established Clear Goals and Objectives and a Sense of Common Purpose for His

Unit in his simple plan. Then, circumstances on Hill 314 actually only caused subordinate leaders to implement minimal internal changes in order to adapt to local situations. Basically, Lynch's organization, course of action, and use of available resources were very sound and he was not forced by the NKPA to surrender the initiative or deviate from his plan. This is not to suggest that Lynch's plan was the model of military perfection; rather, it was just a simple plan with a solid doctrinal foundation and a clearly articulated statement of success which was violently executed and accomplished in a minimal amount of time. In many ways it is a standard worthy of emulation by future combat battalion commanders.

USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS

The LPI of this competency do not readily support an analysis of Lynch's USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS during the battle on Hill 314. It is categorically argumentative as to what degree Lynch employed management technology on Hill 314. It is difficult to assess information filtering, and manage resources (as opposed to Battlefield Operating Systems) is not an entirely appropriate SKA for combat leadership assessment.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

LTC Lynch's demonstration of professional ethics in combat was as simple and straightforward as his plan of attack. In a very low-key manner, Lynch Exemplified and Fostered the Professional Army Ethic.

First and foremost, Lynch unhesitatingly Accepted Responsibility for the conduct of the battle on Hill 314. Regardless of his relationship with his regimental commander and his general shortfall in communications with COL Nist, Lynch stands out as a leader who fully acknowledged ownership of the failures and successes of his subordinates and accepted responsibility for his decisions on Hill 314. Operating in virtual autonomy during the battle, Lynch was the Role Model for his subordinates. He was the senior leader on the battlefield. He was responsible for execution of the mission. He Demonstrated Bearing, Courage, and Maturity to such a high degree that subordinate leaders - like CPT Walker - mimicked his actions.

Lynch led by example: he moved near the front of the battalion column as it wound its way on foot from the blocking positions to the assembly area; he kept his command post as close to the assault companies as possible while he maintained observation of the entire battlefield; and he moved up to the final objective on Knob 3 nearly as soon as it was taken. He showed physical confidence by sharing the hardships of enduring NKPA mortar fires with his men. He showed single-minded tenacity as he drove his battalion forward from peak to peak, pressing the fight. He made logical decisions, based on practiced, practical judgement. He capitalized on the battalion's "moment of

emotional release" to catapult it forward to Knob 3 and accomplish the mission.

The manner in which LTC Lynch exemplified and fostered the professional Army ethic on Hill 314 is a dramatic example of the significance of the actions displayed by a battalion commander when his unit is under fire. Lynch and 3/7 Cav were at a decisive point in their collective organizational combat performance when they climbed Hill 314. The battalion's first experience in combat had been a failed attack and an ignominious night withdrawal from the battlefield. Weapons and equipment had been lost, morale had taken a beating, and the unit self-esteem had sunk as low as the Korean rice paddies. Fortunately for Lynch, 3/7 Cav was relegated to division reserve and got a chance to collect itself; a second tough assignment so soon after its disastrous baptism to combat may have unhinged the "green" battalion of "Infantry School troops." As the battalion commander, Lynch had his work cut-out for him, but he proved to be more than equal to the task. In a turn-around in performance equivalent to a baseball manager leading his last place team to a World Series championship, Lynch led 3/7 Cav to a victory and a Presidential Unit Citation on 12 September 1950.

It was a remarkable achievement for a battalion that had been fighting in the Korean War for only twelve days. But more importantly, it was an achievement directly attributed to the professional Army ethics of LTC

James H. Lynch. The courage, maturity, and integrity he demonstrated on Hill 314 were infectuous; his subordinate leaders acted as if they had been directly influenced by Lynch's behavior.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Clay Blair, The Forgotten War, p. 239.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid., p. 240.
- 11 Ibid., p. 262.
- 12 Ibid., p. 254.
- 13 Ibid., p. 255.
- 14 Robert J. Best, The Structure of a Battle: Analysis of a UN-NK Action North of Taegu, Korea, September, 1950, p. 195.
- 15 Ibid. LTC Lynch commanded 2d Bn, 30th Inf at Ft. Benning before it became 3/7 Cav.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Blair, p. 255.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Ibid., p. 256.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 256-257.
- 23 Best, p. 196.
- 24 Blair, p. 257.

25 Best, p. 196 and Blair, p. 257.

26 Blair, p. 257.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Best, p. 196.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Blair, p. 255.

34 Ibid., p. 259.

35 Ibid., p. 258.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid., pp. 258-259.

40 Best, p. 196.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Blair, p. 259.

44 Best, p. 196.

45 Blair, p. 259.

46 Ibid.

47 Best, p. 171.

48 Ibid., p. 339. 3/7 Cav numbered 535 men. It fielded more combat troops than either 1/7 or 2/7 Cav, and were more rested.

49 Ibid.

50 LTC (later GEN) Johnson would be awarded a DSC for his gallant leadership of 3/8 Cav during the

horrendous fighting of 2-5 Sep 50. In that fighting, Johnson lost 400 casualties out of his 700-man battalion. A few months later, Johnson would replace Palmer as commander of 8th Cav Regiment. Blair, p. 259.

⁵¹ Best, p. 187.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 339.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 169.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 187.

⁵⁶ There is no evidence to suggest the time Lynch received his mission or how long he took to plan his operation. It is conceivable that Lynch conferred with LTC Johnson of 3/8 Cav after the latter had been repulsed from Hill 314, but there is no mention of this in any source. Certainly, Lynch could not have performed any reconnaissance of Hill 314 while Johnson was still battling for it. NKPA fires (noted in Best, p. 167) were so heavy in many of the locations from which Lynch may have wanted to observe Hill 314 that he would necessarily have been precluded from doing so. It is reasonable to assume that due to his service at the Infantry School, Lynch was firmly grounded in tactical doctrine and would have taken the requisite steps in troop leading procedures to insure his mission was successful. The end product speaks for itself.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 198 and 339.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 168-171 and 339.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 340.

⁶¹ Best, p. 198.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid. and p. 340.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 198.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 200.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 340.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 200.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 340.

⁷² Blair, p. 259.

⁷³ Best, p. 200.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 198.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid. and p. 197.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 198. Best indicates that if it was observed U.S. movements which caused the 76mm gun to fire, the NKPA reluctance to register more intensive artillery fires on the movement indicates that they believed Lynch's column was the type of routine 8th Cav traffic they had harassed for many days.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid. Residual ground haze delayed the airstrike set for 0930.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 199.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 198.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 199.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 202. For the purpose of flow and clarity of the narrative, the exceedingly confusing change in control measures brought on by the discovery of Company L, 8th Cav on Knob O is not discussed. Instead, the description of the battalion commander's plan has already incorporated this change in coordinating instructions. Even though 3/7 Cav leaders were informed of the adjustment in control measures, after-action narratives clearly indicate that the interviewees were neither conversant nor comfortable with the change. Lynch learned a valuable lesson here that he did not repeat in his

second DSC-winning performance as "Task Force Penetration" commander in the Inchon-Eighth Army link-up nine days later (see Edwin P. Hoyt, On to the Yalu, pp. 162-166.

87 Ibid., pp. 200-201.

88 Ibid., p. 201.

89 Ibid. 3/7 Cav 81mm mortars were configured in "split section": two guns were set up in the battalion assembly area and two guns were positioned halfway up the ridgeline between the assembly area and the LD. The two mortars on the ridgeline took over several hundred rounds of ammunition from 3/8 Cav instead of attempting to transport its own ammo up the ridge.

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid., p. 199. Airstrikes had been common on the objective site for a number of days and had been viewed by the NKPA as active defense measures of the 8th Cav.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid., pp. 187, 199, 203 and 204.

94 Ibid., p. 201.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid., p. 200.

97 Ibid., p. 203.

98 Ibid., p. 198.

99 Ibid., p. 203. There is no record of casualties taken in the fight for Knob 1.

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid., p. 215.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

106 Ibid.

- 107 Ibid., p. 214.
- 108 Ibid.
- 109 Ibid., p. 215.
- 110 Ibid., p. 203.
- 111 Ibid.
- 112 Ibid., p. 204.
- 113 Ibid., p. 227.
- 114 Ibid.
- 115 Ibid.
- 116 Ibid.
- 117 Ibid., p. 229.
- 118 Ibid., p. 205.
- 119 Ibid.
- 120 Ibid.
- 121 Ibid., p. 231.
- 122 Ibid., p. 206.
- 123 Ibid.
- 124 Ibid., p. 207.
- 125 Ibid., p. 208.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 Ibid., p. 235.
- 128 Ibid., p. 208.
- 129 Ibid., p. 233.
- 130 Ibid., p. 237.
- 131 Ibid., p. 210.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Ibid., p. 211.

134 Ibid., p. 212.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 Ibid., p. 239.

138 Ibid.

139 Ibid.

140 Ibid., p. 212.

141 Ibid., pp. 216-218.

142 Ibid., p. 212.

143 Ibid., p. 241.

144 Ibid., p. 212.

145 Ibid.

146 Ibid.

147 Ibid., p. 241.

148 Ibid.

149 Ibid., p. 241.

150 Ibid.

151 Ibid., p. 245.

152 Ibid., p. 341.

153 Ibid., p. 214.

154 Ibid.

155 Department of the Army, General Orders No.
33, Presidential Unit Citation for 3/7 Cav, dtd 31 March
1952.

156 Ibid.

157 Ibid.

158 Best, p. 243.

159 Blair, p. 259.

160 Best, p. 6.

161 Blair, p. 259.

162 Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

LTC HAROLD G. MOORE, 14-16 NOVEMBER 1965

In a nationwide address on 28 July 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced "I have today ordered to Vietnam the airmobile division..."¹ The 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), activated on 16 June 1965 after an extensive period of experimentation and training in the fledgling airmobility concept, was to be the U.S. Army's first division-size unit to deploy to Vietnam.² Within 90 days of its activation order, the 1st Cavalry Division closed into its base camp at An Khe, prepared to conduct combat operations.³

At the time of the arrival of the 1st Cav Division at An Khe, the North Vietnamese government was putting the finishing touches on its "Dong Xuan (Winter-Spring Campaign) of 1965-66." The campaign called for an "army corps" to achieve four specific objectives: (1) destroy all U.S. Special Forces camps in Pleiku and Kontum Provinces, thereby removing the long-standing impediment to North Vietnamese Army (NVA) operations; (2) seize the city of Kontum, site of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) 24th Special Tactical Zone headquarters; (3) destroy the Le Thanh District Regional and Popular Force (RFPF) headquarters at Thanh Binh, a village mid-way between Pleiku City and Duc Co; and (4) seize Pleiku City, the site of the ARVN II Corps headquarters and the

location of the ARVN reserves for all of the western plateau.⁴

By 12 October 1965, BG Man's 32d and 33d Regiments had completed the planned infiltration from North Vietnam to the Field Front assembly area at ANTA Village. Sited on the eastern slope of the Chu Pong Massif, a 450-square-kilometer mountain mass just inside the Cambodian border, ANTA enabled Man's regiments to stage at a location virtually equidistant from the campaign's first targets - the Special Forces camps at Plei Me and Duc Co. With the 32d and 33d Regiments assembled, and the 66th Regiment due to arrive in late October or early November, BG Man opted to initiate his campaign in mid-October with a two regiment attack on Plei Me. Located twenty-five miles south of Pleiku City, this garrison of Montagnard Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) troops guarded the southern flank of Pleiku City - Man's real objective - and overwatched the principal NVA infiltration route from Cambodia. Man's attack on Plei Me would directly result in the momentous clash at LZ X-Ray on 14 November 1965.⁵

At 2300, 19 October, the 33d Regiment began the Field Front's three phase attack on Plei Me. Hammering the camp with intensive mortar, small arms, and recoilless rifle fire, the commander of the 33d Regiment sent barely enough NVA riflemen and sappers in the assault to make the Montagnard defenders believe they would soon be overrun. The 33d Regiment was applying just enough human pressure

to "lure" a relief column from Pleiku City for the second phase of the operation, the 32d Regiment's ambush.⁶

However, the anticipated relief column did not present itself as rapidly as expected. Unable to close the trap, the 4th Field Front limped back to the Chu Pong staging area on 25 October. BG Man's first offensive had been repulsed, with severe losses.⁷

The 1st Cav Division had initially conducted restricted reinforcement missions in support of the ARVN relief of Plei Me. On 26 October GEN Westmoreland visited the forward command post of the division's 1st Brigade and after a short conference with MG Larsen, First Field Force Commander, and MG H.W.O. Kinnard, 1st Cav Division Commander, Westmoreland dramatically changed the scope of the 1st Cav mission. Instead of reinforcing ARVN II Corps operations, the 1st Cav now had the freedom of unlimited offensive operations to seek out and destroy the remains of the NVA 4th Field Front.⁸ Ordered by Westmoreland to conduct a classic cavalry pursuit of the retreating NVA, Kinnard dispatched LTC Harlow Clark's 1st Brigade into the Ia Drang Valley on 28 October.⁹

The Ia Drang Valley consisted of about 2500-square-kilometers of "no-man's-land". Thickly jungled, with trees 100 feet high, and "open" areas covered by elephant grass almost six feet high, the valley contained no passable roads and no inhabitants. Bordered on the west by the Chu Pong Massif, the valley was viciously cross-

compartmented by the Ia Drang, Ia Meur, and Ia Tac rivers which flowed from northeast to southwest. Along the Ia Drang River, within the vicinity of the Chu Pong, the area was eerie, haunting, and "spooky beyond belief".¹⁰ Blazing daily heat and frigid night temperatures produced sinister, contrary mists which kept the best of soldiers "perpetually and increasingly on edge".¹¹

LTC Clark's 1st Brigade fanned out to the west of Plei Me, operating on a broad front in the hope of regaining contact with BG Man's illusive 32d and 33d Regiments. During the last two days of October, Clark's troopers began to find and engage the NVA in frequent but widely separated contacts.¹²

MG Kinnard was generally satisfied with the results of 1st Brigade's operations in pursuit of the NVA. But LTC Clark's troopers "had been flying and fighting continuously for over two weeks", so Kinnard pulled the brigade out of the line for a few days' rest and sent in COL Tim Brown's 3d Brigade to continue the pursuit.¹³

COL Tim Brown's "Garry Owen" brigade consisted of the 1st and 2d Battalions, 7th Cavalry, and the 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry, attached from 2d Brigade. LTC Harold G. Moore commanded 1/7 Cav, LTC Robert A. McDade commanded 2/7 Cav, and LTC Robert B. Tully commanded 2/5 Cav.¹⁴ COL Brown deployed these three fresh infantry battalions on 10 November in vigorous saturation

patrolling south and southeast of Plei Me, in accordance with MG Kinnard's instructions.¹⁵

When Brown's patrols failed to make contact with the NVA, MG Kinnard directed his 3d Brigade commander to turn westward toward the Cambodian border. MG Larsen's Field Force intelligence staff believed that the NVA were still concentrating along the Cambodian border. Brown opted to reinvestigate the heavily jungled Ia Drang valley at the base of the Chu Pong Massif, a spot where previous combat had occurred but where no follow-up ground sweep had been conducted.¹⁶ To Brown this location might contain the staging area for the 32d Regiment, so far unaccounted for after Plei Mei.¹⁷ In addition, Brown had seen "a big red star" on the division G-2 situation map indicating a possible assembly area for NVA regiments infiltrating through Cambodia.¹⁸ Brown also knew this site had been a Viet Minh bastion during the French Indochina days and it was likely to be "recycled" for the current NVA operations.¹⁹

Meanwhile, BG Chu Huy Man was also making an estimate of the situation. Interpreting the change of Kinnard's brigades as the beginning of a 1st Cav Division withdrawal from the central highlands, BG Man decided to resume operations.²⁰ Though he had failed with his initial lure-and-ambush tactics against Plei Me, and had incurred heavy losses, BG Man decided to conduct a second assault against Plei Me. This time, he would employ the

remnants of the 33d Regiment with the 32d Regiment and the slightly bloodied 66th Regiment in a coordinated, division-size attack on Plei Me on 16 November.²¹

By 11 November BG Man had staged his assault echelons in the Ia Drang Valley. The depleted 33d Regiment had formed into a single, composite battalion and was assembled in the valley between the Ia Drang river and Hill 542, the most prominent peak of the Chu Pong mountains. Thirteen kilometers to the west, along the northern bank of Ia Drang was the formidable 32d Regiment. The 66th Regiment, spoiling for a fight, had its three battalions sited astride the Ia Drang River just a few kilometers west of the 33d Regiment. One 120-man mortar battalion and one 14.5mm antiaircraft gun battalion were still infiltrating on the Ho Chi Minh trail in Cambodia, but were due to close in to the Field Front assembly area before 16 November.²²

Around midnight, 12 November, the NVA "conveniently confirmed their continued presence west of Plei Me"²³ mortaring COL Brown's brigade command post at the Catecka Tea Plantation, a few miles southwest of Pleiku. Although the attack proved inconclusive,²⁴ Brown's CP was shaken up by the close call. This action added impetus to Brown's decision to move a battalion into the fifteen-square-kilometer, oval shaped zone named Area Lime - the foot of the Chu Pong Massif.²⁵

At 1700 on 13 November COL Brown met with LTC Harold G. Moore, Commander of 1/7 Cav, at the Company A, 1/7 Cav command post about seven kilometers south of Plei Me. Brown ordered LTC Moore to execute an airmobile assault into AREA LIME and conduct search-and-destroy operations around the Chu Pong Massif from 14 November through 15 November.²⁶ Brown's guidance to Moore included the precaution of keeping rifle companies within supporting distance of each other during the search and destroy mission because of the great possibility of landing in the middle of a NVA assembly area. Brown allocated sixteen of the brigade's twenty-four helicopters for Moore's insertion. Fire support would come from two 105mm howitzer batteries of 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery, firing from LZ Falcon, nine kilometers east of the Chu Pong mountains. Lastly, Brown shared with Moore his concern that 1/7 had yet to be tested in battle against a large enemy force.²⁷

After receiving his brigade commander's guidance, Moore returned to his command post at Plei Me to issue warning orders and conduct a careful, doctrinally sound mission analysis.²⁸ Working with his S-3, Captain Gregory "Matt" Dillon, Moore began a thorough map reconnaissance of AREA LIME and tentatively selected three potential landing zones he named "Tango", "Yankee", and "X-Ray".²⁹

For the tactics of this operation, Moore decided to deviate from the normal techniques employed thus far by the 1st Cav Division. Instead of landing each company in a separate LZ, he opted to land his entire battalion in one LZ and conduct the search and destroy mission from that secure LZ. This plan was simple, took into account COL Brown's guidance about enemy contact, and provided Moore with enough flexibility to react to unforeseen circumstances. To find an LZ large enough to accommodate ten helicopters at one time, Moore arranged for a first light leaders' reconnaissance of the tentatively selected LZ's at first light on 14 November. This would be followed up by an operations order at 0830.³⁰ Moore radioed a warning order to his company commanders, issuing instructions for Companies A and C to recall their saturation patrols and concentrate for pick-up for the air assault. Company B, having just spent a sleepless night securing COL Brown's CP, would be shifted from Catecka Plantation to Moore's CP at Plei Me to begin the operation. Company commanders would fly with Moore on the leaders' recon at dawn to confirm the battalion LZ.³¹

By 2200 Moore had supervised the accomplishment of as many of the details of the operation as could be done prior to the reconnaissance. He had two primary concerns. First, his mission in the Chu Pong area would be conducted with his battalion at only two-thirds strength.³² 1/7 had been hard hit by malaria and

individual rotations back to the United States.

Fortunately, almost all of Moore's twenty officers going into the operation had been with the battalion since its air assault testing days at Ft. Benning.³³ Second, Moore wanted to make sure that every available fire support asset was coordinated to back up the air assault. Air Force close air support, air cav aerial rocket gunships, and field artillery preparations would give him the combat power advantage if he ran into big trouble.

14 November dawned bright and clear and promised to be another typically scorching day in the Central Highlands.³⁴ Company B had been repositioned from Catecka to Plei Me by 0630. CH-47 Chinooks were consolidating Batteries A and C of the 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery at LZ Falcon to support 1/7 Cav. LTC Moore finished his briefing on the mission and flight route of the recon party and the group boarded two UH-1D Hueys. "Few units that have a rendezvous with destiny have an inkling of their fate until the historical moment touches them. So it was with the 1/7 Cav on the morning of 14 November."³⁵ Twenty-three kilometers to the west, elements of the NVA 32d Regiment uncoiled from their base camps at the foot of the Chu Pong Mountains and began moving east. The 66th Regiment and the remnants of the 33d Regiment remained in ANTA, preparing to move on Plei Me the next day.³⁶ Moore's rendezvous with destiny was only two hours away.

The leaders recon revealed that only two of Moore's three map-selected LZs were large enough to land a platoon and a half in the initial lift. Deciding on LZ X-Ray as the tentative battalion LZ, Moore directed the scout section leader from C Troop, 9th Cavalry, to conduct another over-flight to confirm LZ X-Ray. This time, the reconnaissance would be at low-level and would search the slopes of the Chu Pong mountains for NVA.³⁷

Back by 0855, the scout section reported LZ X-Ray as capable of accepting ten UHls in trail formation. Also, the section had spotted communications wire running along an east-west trail a few hundred meters north of the LZ. Moore decided on LZ X-Ray as the primary battalion LZ, with Yankee and Tango as alternates to be employed only with his permission.³⁸

Hal Moore was well aware that he could be in a serious firefight shortly after landing.³⁹ Consequently, he integrated a deception plan to keep the NVA guessing as to which of the three likely LZs he would land. Briefing his operations order to his major subordinates around 0900, Moore outlined his scheme of maneuver. First, the 21st Artillery would fire an eight minute diversionary preparation on LZs Yankee and Tango to deceive the enemy. The 105mm batteries would then shift to LZ X-Ray and fire a twenty minute preparation, concentrating on the slopes of a finger that extended from the Chu Pongs just to the northwest of LZ X-Ray. Lifting

fires at H minus one minute, the artillery would enable the aerial rocket gunships to place fires on the northern and western borders of the LZ, closest to the mountains, and on the tree line that sliced into LZ X-Ray from the north. With the lift aircraft about to touch down the gunship escorts of Company A, 229th Aviation Battalion would lace the elephant grass of LZ X-Ray with rocket and machinegun fires.⁴⁰

Company B, commanded by CPT John D. Herren, would be the initial assault company, going in with sixteen helicopters right behind the gunship prep. Herren's unit would quickly secure the LZ for the follow-on lifts. The rest of the landing plan called for Company A, commanded by CPT Ramon A. "Tony" Nadal, to be the second unit to land. Company C, commanded by CPT Robert H. Edwards, was third in the order of movement. CPT Louis R. LeFebvre's Company D would be the last unit into the LZ.⁴¹

Once into the LZ, Companies A and B would move out and search north and northeast. Company A would move on the right of Herren's company. Company C, the battalion reserve, would assume Herren's LZ security mission and would be prepared to move north and northwest to search the foothills of the Chu Pongs once Company D landed. LeFebvre's Company D would form the "mortar battery" on LZ X-Ray. Companies A, B, C would bring in one 81mm mortar each and a maximum ammo load and place their guns under Company D control. Priority of fires, all platforms,

would be to Company B initially for the air assault, then to Company A for the sweep to the west.⁴²

1st Battalion, 21st Artillery commenced its preparatory fires at 1017. At 1030, Herren's four platoons lifted off from Plei Me. Moore was going in with the initial assault element. He felt confident of the prospects for success on the operation. His battalion was part of "the best trained, best disciplined division to go into combat since the Airborne Divisions of WWII."⁴³ He knew he had created a strong, cohesive unit. He had encouraged unit cohesion by directing his lieutenants to seek out the NCOs who were Korean War combat veterans to learn as much as possible from these experts. Likewise, his NCO's were charged to help the new officers.

Now it was time for the payoff. The twenty minute artillery prep concluded with a white phosphorous round (WP), and this signalled the approach of the aerial rocket gunships. The formation of sixteen helicopters carrying LTC Moore and the first lift of Company B were on "short final approach" as the gunships expended half their ordnance and then orbited near the LZ, on call for another run. Moore glanced out of his chopper as these gunships pounded the LZ and "had a renewed instinct that contact was coming."⁴⁴ In a matter of seconds the assault ships flared for landing. Snap firing at likely enemy positions on the landing zone, Moore led the first lift of Company B across LZ X-Ray.⁴⁵

Once on the ground, Moore saw LZ X-Ray from a different perspective. The terrain offered both advantages and disadvantages to the assault troopers. The landing zone was covered with hazel-colored elephant grass over five feet high, ideal for concealing crawling soldiers but detrimental to good communications between defensive positions.⁴⁶ Sparse scrub brush ringed the oval-shaped LZ. A grove of trees in the middle of the LZ forced the air assault aircraft to land in two side-by-side mini-landing zones.⁴⁷ Numerous anthills which dotted the LZ were excellent cover for crew served weapons positions.⁴⁸ The western edge of the LZ was creased by a waist-high, dry creek bed, a potential site for a defensive position.⁴⁹ The trees along the western and northeastern edges of the LZ signalled the beginning of the slopes of the Chu Pong Massif. The mountain, thickly vegetated, cast an imposing shadow across the LZ. A fight to extricate the NVA from the mountain, which rose five hundred meters above the LZ, would be a physically punishing mission.⁵⁰

As the lift helicopters began their thirty minute turn-around flight to Plei Me for the second serial of the battalion, Herren's troopers implemented Moore's new technique for securing the LZ. Retaining the balance of his force on the clump of trees in the center of LZ as a reaction force, Herren directed his 1st Platoon to sweep the tree line in squad size patrols.⁵¹ This

technique would enable Herren to make contact with the enemy with a small, economical force and then pile on with a heavy maneuver element. Moore saw that the air assault was running smoothly so far. "Although not visible," Moore recalled, "the enemy could be sensed. I had the feeling he was definitely there."⁵²

The enemy was there. On the morning of 14 November, BG Man's division-size force had initiated its movement toward Plei Me for the scheduled 16 November strike on the Special Forces camp. The arrival of Moore's troopers caught BG Man by surprise. The Chu Pong Massif - ANTA, the base camp - was considered to be free from U.S. attack. With Moore right in the middle of the 66th Regiment's assembly area, Man immediately radioed the lead elements of the 32d Regiment to turn back. As he readied the 66th Regiment to pounce on the small Air Cav Division force, Man sent word to the H-15 Main Force Viet Cong Battalion, operating south of the Chu Pongs, for assistance.⁵³ By noon, Man intended to hit Moore with two battalions of the 66th Regiment, coming down from the mountain side, and the composite battalion of the 33d Regiment, who would attack from their positions just west of LZ X-Ray.⁵⁴

As the squads of 2LT Alan E. Deveny's 1st Platoon, Company B swept the perimeter of the LZ, Moore established his command post in the center of the LZ at the edge of the grove of trees. Moore selected a giant anthill, ten

feet high and twelve feet round which had withstood the artillery prep fires.⁵⁵ From this central location, Moore could command his companies as they fanned-out from the LZ and he could control incoming air assault lifts as they approached LZ X-Ray.

At 1120, with Company A enroute to the LZ, CPT Herren notified Moore that an NVA soldier had been captured by 2LT Deveny's platoon in the brush just fifty meters off the LZ. Moore immediately moved to Herren's location with his intelligence officer, CPT Metsker, and his Montagnard interpreter, Mr. Nik. The prisoner, a deserter or straggler, announced that there were three NVA battalions on the Chu Pong mountains "anxious to kill Americans."⁵⁶ To Moore, this piece of news confirmed his belief that the "long jump" executed by his battalion, instead of the "short airmobile moves" which would have inched toward the NVA, had been "the way to go for the enemy". "If he had been near Plei Me on the 13th," Moore later reasoned, "and moved west, I estimated we would hit him."⁵⁷

Moore was "elated" and "exhilarated" by the news that contact with the NVA was imminent.⁵⁸ But the reality of being struck by an enemy at least three times the strength of 1/7 Cav caused Moore to turn his attention back to the air assault operation. He now had to get the rest of his battalion quickly and safely into LZ X-Ray.

To Moore, additional security precautions involving the force currently on the ground would be imperative. Moore then gave CPT Herren new instructions for Company B. Due to the close proximity of the NVA, a buffer needed to be established between the Chu Pongs and the LZ. Moore directed Herren to intensify his reconnaissance efforts outside the LZ and to be prepared to assume the Company C mission of exploring the terrain at the foot of the mountains. In the event Herren was ordered to switch to the Company C assignment, he would orient his attention on two pieces of key terrain: the finger which emanated from the slopes of the mountains and pointed at the heart of the LZ; and the draw northwest of the LZ.⁵⁹

As Moore was issuing these instructions to Herren CPT Tony Nadal's Company A landed on the LZ. When CPT Nadal found Moore on the LZ, the battalion commander directed him to assume the Company B mission of LZ security until Company C arrived. Moore then ordered CPT Herren to execute his "be prepared" mission and proceed toward the finger at the base of the Chu Pong mountains.⁶⁰

Other than the incident with the deserter, things remained quiet around LZ X-Ray. At 1220, Herren began his movement to the northwest, with 1st and 2d Platoons abreast and 3d Platoon in reserve. The troopers of Company B "were tensed for an approaching fight."⁶¹

At 1245, Deveny's 1st Platoon ran headlong into elements of the 66th Regiment who were hurrying down the mountain.⁶² The lead elements of the NVA regiment, about platoon-size, quickly pinned down the 1st Platoon and began placing withering small arms fire on Deveny's front and flanks. Deveny immediately contacted Herren and reported he was taking heavy casualties and needed help.⁶³

Herren directed 2LT Herrick to move his 2d Platoon to regain contact with 1st Platoon and relieve the pressure against the right flank of Deveny's platoon. Herrick got underway but almost instantly ran into a squad of NVA who were headed for LZ X-Ray. As the NVA reversed course and headed back up the mountain side, Herrick gave chase. In a matter of minutes, Herrick's 2d Platoon was engulfed by enfilade fire from the right front. The NVA fire was especially vicious and included mortars and rockets.⁶⁴

Herren now had a new situation on his hands. Having just ordered Deal's 3d Platoon to go to Deveny's aid, it became apparent that the enemy was concentrating its efforts in an attempt to decimate Herrick. Herren called Moore with a situation report and then, as his lone 81mm mortar fired all of the forty rounds that were brought in on the air assault, he ordered Deveny to await Deal's arrival and then conduct a movement to reach Herrick.⁶⁵

At 1330, the third troop lift arrived at the LZ with the last platoon of Company A and the first elements of CPT Robert H. Edwards' Company C. The lifts were now fragmented into smaller serials of four to six aircraft because of the scattered pick-up zones of the follow-on companies.⁶⁶ A steady rain of NVA mortar rounds began to "feel out" the battalion's defenses on the LZ. In the midst of "geysers of red dirt" and "the thick pall of dust and smoke,"⁶⁷ Moore issued instructions to his A and C Company commanders. Nadal would move instantly to assist Herren. He would do so by sending one platoon out immediately to push through to Herrick's isolated unit, then move with the remainder of Company A to secure Herren's open flank. CPT Edwards would take what he had of Company C and assume Nadal's previous mission of LZ security. Edwards' force would strongpoint positions within the treeline to the west, southwest, and south of the LZ. Edwards would also cover Nadal's left flank as Company A moved out to help Herren.⁶⁸ Moore was taking a colossal risk by sending his only reserve - Edwards - to the western end of the perimeter. Moore gambled that in order to stave off the mounting threat from the northwest, he could take a chance with LZ security until the next troop lift arrived. Unknown to Moore, the thin defensive screen of the LZ had already been breached by 66th Regiment scouts.⁶⁹

About the time Nadal and Edwards moved out on their respective missions, Moore's CP came under fairly heavy small arms and automatic weapons fires. Moore promptly radioed Dillon, flying above the LZ in the command and control helicopter, to request and coordinate artillery, aerial rocket artillery, and close air support around the LZ. Moore directed Dillon to arrange for fires to be concentrated initially on the lower slopes of the Chu Pongs. On order, fires were to be directed "to ring the LZ with a curtain of steel."⁷⁰ Priority of fires would go to units in contact. A few minutes later, U.S. Air Force A1E's from Pleiku were dropping five hundred pound bombs on the Chu Pongs. Artillery fires impacted just as quickly but it took some time before the artillery forward observers in the rifle companies could "walk" the rounds close enough to their beleaguered perimeters to be effective. Simultaneous with Moore's call for fire, COL Brown arrived "on station", orbiting above the LZ.

It was apparent to Moore that he had tripped a hornet's nest and that the NVA were out to destroy him. While the situation confronting Moore was serious, it was by no means desperate. At the time, Moore did not feel compelled to request reinforcement from Brown. "The PAVN (Peoples' Army of Vietnam) were reacting violently," Moore recalled. "And we were trying our best to retain and maintain the momentum of our air assault and tactical

initiative by carrying the fight to the enemy off the LZ while simultaneously keeping him away from it."⁷¹

Meanwhile, Nadal was maneuvering to assist Company B's imperilled platoons. 2LT Walter J. Marm's 2d Platoon soon linked up with 2LT Deal's 3d Platoon of Company B. Shortly afterward, a sharp firefight broke out. Marm and Deal had apparently uncovered the NVA force which had initially outflanked Herrick and was now enroute to envelope all of Herren's unit. After a brisk exchange of gunfire which brought casualties to both sides, the NVA broke contact and headed toward the dry creek bed in an attempt to include Marm in the encirclement.⁷²

In the dry creek bed behind Marm the company-size NVA pincer movement ran straight into Nadal's follow-up platoons. 2LT Robert E. Taft's 3d Platoon engaged the enemy in extremely savage and close-range combat. The remnants of the NVA company then broke away from Company A and continued their movement toward the LZ.⁷³

As the firefight escalated in the creek bed, the first eight UH-1s of the battalion's fifth lift touched down on the LZ. This lift carried the remainder of Edwards' Company C and CPT Louis R. LeFebvre and his lead elements of Company D. The LZ was under such tremendously heavy enemy fire, Moore waved off the second set of eight aircraft.⁷⁴

Company C was next to feel the wrath of the NVA attack. Edwards now had all of his troops except three

aircraft loads which were diverted from the LZ by the battalion commander. Following Moore's instructions, Edwards had quickly moved his platoons into a blocking position adjacent to CPT Nadal's right flank. At this time, Company A's firefight in the creek bed had reached full fury. Edwards had just completed the positioning of his platoons when he was attacked by the NVA company which was attempting to outflank Company A and overrun the LZ. The North Vietnamese soldiers, wearing full combat gear (unlike the Viet Cong) and extensive camouflage, were stopped in their tracks, with heavy losses.⁷⁵

The time was 1400. Moore's timely decision to position Edwards south of Nadal rather than north had thwarted the enemy attempt to overrun the LZ. In shifting Edwards to Nadal's flank, Moore exposed the rear of his battalion. To consolidate his security on the LZ, Moore ordered Edwards to tie-in and coordinate with CPT LeFebvre and Company D to his left. The perimeter around LZ X-Ray now extended south and southeast into the brush.⁷⁶

When Edwards linked-up with Company D, he found that LeFebvre had been evacuated with severe wounds. Staff Sergeant George Gonzales, leader of the battalion anti-tank platoon, had assumed command of Company D. Edwards got Moore's permission to move Gonzales into a gap on Company C's left flank.⁷⁷ Also, Edwards learned that the battalion's mortars had not yet been consolidated according to the operations order. He then received

Moore's approval to establish a mortar "battery" under the operational control of his mortar sergeant until the battalion mortar platoon leader and fire direction center air-landed. In short order Edwards' battery was firing in support of units in contact. Unfortunately, the noise, smoke, and confusion around the LZ precluded company forward observers from adjusting effective fire on enemy targets. Still, Edwards' clear thinking gave the battalion an additional fire support "organization" for the afternoon combat.⁷⁸

By about 1500 an uneasy lull had set in around LZ X-Ray. Moore took this opportunity to call for the last elements of his battalion to air-land. Judging that a small section of the eastern edge of the LZ would be the most secure site for the next lift to touch down, Moore brought in the last squads of Company C and the reconnaissance platoon of Company D. Moore personally directed this landing and all future helicopter approaches to the LZ.⁷⁹ The temporary lull was shattered when the 66th Regiment's anti-aircraft company fired its 12.5mm heavy machine guns on the approaching helicopters. The troopers unloaded without casualties, but two choppers were disabled.⁸⁰ Moore reconstituted his battalion reserve from these fresh troops.⁸¹

As concerned as he was with getting all of his battalion into the fight at LZ X-Ray, Moore was equally aware of the need to evacuate his more seriously wounded

troopers. The battalion casualty collection point had been set up not far from Moore's CP near the center of the LZ. In the early afternoon, the battalion surgeon and four aidmen landed on the LZ to take charge of casualty treatment and evacuation. Rather than expose unarmed medical evacuation helicopters to the brutal NVA anti-aircraft fire, Moore personally arranged with the lift helicopter commander for departing choppers to quickly load wounded for a short ride to LZ Falcon, a secure LZ where medevac birds could land. This arrangement "worked exceptionally well and did a great deal to bolster morale."⁸²

Based on the situation reports from his company commanders, Moore felt reasonably certain his battalion was up against 500-600 NVA regulars. Taken in the context of the pre-operation intelligence picture, the possibility existed that at least two more NVA battalions were converging on LZ X-Ray. Moore realized it was time to ask for help. Shortly after 1500 Moore called COL Brown and requested reinforcement with at least one additional rifle company.⁸³

COL Brown was firmly convinced that the NVA were closing in on LZ X-Ray to annihilate Moore. In anticipation of a request for help from Moore, Brown had alerted LTC Robert B. Tully's 2/7 Cav to prepare to go to Moore's aid. When Moore's call for a rifle company reached him, Brown responded by directing the attachment

of Tully's Company B, 2/7 Cav to Moore, effective 1528. Company B, commanded by CPT Myron Diduryk, would air assault into LZ X-Ray immediately after it was assembled at Catecka Plantation. Tully would then assemble the rest of his battalion as rapidly as possible at LZ Victor, three kilometers southeast of X-Ray. Brown's plan was for Tully to conduct a foot movement from LZ Victor commencing at first light on 15 November. Tully's lead elements would conceivably reach Moore by mid-morning. Brown wanted Tully to move overland in daylight instead of using helicopters at night because he "didn't relish the idea of moving a steady stream of helicopters into an LZ as hot as X-Ray". In addition, Brown felt "a foot move would be unobserved and the battalion might come in behind the enemy."⁸⁴

At 1600 Moore had his full battalion on the ground.⁸⁵ His troopers had thus far succeeded in defeating the NVA attempts to overrun the LZ. Moore conceded that the NVA were aggressive, well-trained, and highly motivated. He also saw that they could shoot extremely well and were not afraid to die.⁸⁶ But Herrick's 2d Platoon of Company B was still isolated within the sea of disciplined, well-led NVA. Moore had to rescue this lone platoon before it was completely wiped out.⁸⁷

Moore was going to try one more attempt to reach Herrick before dark. Now that Marm's 1st Platoon, Company

A, had linked-up with Deveny's 1st Platoon and Deal's 3d Platoon, Company B, Moore directed this force to withdraw back down the finger to the dry creek bed. The withdrawal would be covered by the battalion mortar battery plus artillery fires. The platoons would withdraw to the creek bed with all dead and wounded troopers. At the creek bed, Companies A and B would prepare to conduct a coordinated attack to reach Herrick's platoon.⁸⁸

What Moore did not know, but could surely expect, was that Herrick's platoon was making its last, desperate stand. During the course of the afternoon, the NVA maintained relentless pressure against Herrick's tiny perimeter. The platoon chain of command had been mowed down, virtually one after the other, until control rested in the hands of the 3d Squad Leader, Staff Sergeant Clyde E. Savage.⁸⁹

Within minutes of assuming command of the beleaguered platoon, Savage had called for and adjusted artillery concentrations to ring the perimeter. He continued walking the highly accurate artillery fires toward his position until the rounds impacted as close as 20 meters from the platoon. With seven effectives out of the original twenty-seven-man platoon, Savage and his group continued to exact a deadly toll on two NVA companies whose attention was solely concentrated on the reduction of Savage's "Bastogne in Microcism."⁹⁰ These two NVA companies never joined in the attacks against LZ

X-Ray. Had they been involved in the flanking maneuvers around the LZ, it is conceivable that Moore's thinly stretched perimeter defenses would not have held out against the additional combat power. Also, there is some question as to why the NVA "concentrated sources all out of proportion to the strength of the tiny American outpost."⁹¹ The answer is found in the NVA "lure-and-ambush" tactic; the NVA were maintaining constant pressure on Herrick's platoon, just like it had a Plei Me, while an ambush, or assault force, attempted to destroy Moore's "relief column".

Moore's two company coordinated attack would use the dry creek bed as the line of departure and would be preceded by artillery and aerial rocket fire. At 1620 the two company attack commenced. The artillery prep, designed to secure the front of the attacking force from ambush, was impacting too far in front of the companies. Not 50 meters beyond the creek bed, the attack ran into a hail of fire from NVA who had infiltrated and had dug themselves into "spider holes" and anthills and had tied themselves in trees. Blending perfectly with the honey-colored elephant grass, the khaki-uniformed NVA - the "ambush" segment of the lure-and-ambush tactic - inflicted severe damage on the assault companies.⁹²

Nadal realized that his company was now postured in an extremely vulnerable position, susceptible to being systematically reduced by the NVA ambush force. All of

Nadal's platoon leaders were dead or wounded; his artillery forward observer and his communication NCO had been killed right next to him. The attack had stalled after an advance of only 150 meters. It was just a few minutes past 1700 and the shadows were already lengthening on the eastern side of the Chu Pongs. Accepting the fact that he would not be able to break through to Herrick before it got dark, Nadal called Moore and requested permission to withdraw to the dry creek bed.⁹³

Monitoring Nadal's call to Moore, Herren had reached the same conclusion about his chances for success. By 1700, Herren had lost 30 casualties, and his depleted company had barely moved beyond the creek bed before it was halted by the stinging NVA fire. In spite of his unit's collective desire to rescue their isolated bretheren, Herren realized it was pointless to continue to send his understrength platoons against a dug in enemy.⁹⁴

Moore made the tough decision to withdraw the exposed companies. In reality, Moore had little choice. His battalion was fighting three separate engagements: one force was defending the LZ, one platoon was cut-off and encircled, and two companies were attacking to retrieve the isolated platoon. Moore had to arrive at a coherent scheme of maneuver or risk being defeated in detail by the overwhelming numbers of NVA. Analyzing his situation, Moore rationalized that the security of the LZ

was paramount to the survival of his battalion while it fought outnumbered. He anticipated that other NVA battalions were converging on LZ X-Ray to destroy him, sometime after dark or at first light the next morning. Instead of playing into the NVA "lure-and-ambush" tactics of attrition, Moore decided to consolidate his base at the LZ. Preparations would be made for a night attack or a first-light attack to relieve the besieged platoon. Since he still had communications with SSG Savage, Moore contemplated ordering Savage to exfiltrate back to the LZ. Though a defensive stand painfully reminded Moore of his Korean War experiences at Pork Chop Hill, Triangle Hill, and Old Baldy, he ordered Nadal and Herren to withdraw their companies to the dry creek bed. Both units would pull back under cover of an artillery smoke screen, bringing their dead and wounded with them.⁹⁵

Even though Nadal's request to withdraw had been a simple, common sense approach to the situation, the actual movement promised to be extremely difficult. Both companies were under fire, and were having a tough time conducting the hazardous retrograde maneuver. Moore called for the 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery at LZ Falcon to fire smoke rounds to mask the withdrawal of the two units. When he was notified by the battalion fire support officer that no smoke rounds were available, Moore was faced with another tough decision. He recalled from his Korean War days that white phosphorous (WP) rounds often

provided the same heavy concentration of smoke when they detonated as did the conventional smoke shells. If WP was fired "danger close" to friendly troops, the burning particles of phosphorous would wound the troopers as well as the enemy. Given the gravity of the situation, and the demonstrated accuracy of the artillery up to this point, Moore decided to go with WP fires as close to the companies as possible. After two volleys, and no friendly casualties, both companies made it back to LZ X-Ray.⁹⁶ From a distance, LZ X-Ray "resembled a heavy ground fog with dancing splotches of colors", produced by the exploding WP rounds and "the discharge of dyed smoke grenades."⁹⁷

At 1705, as Moore was orchestrating the withdrawal, the 2d Platoon and the command group of Company B, 2/7 Cav landed at the LZ. Amidst cheers from Moore's troopers on the LZ, CPT Diduryk dramatically reported to Moore for instructions. Minutes later the remainder of Diduryk's 120-man company had closed in on the LZ. Moore initially placed Diduryk's company in battalion reserve. At about 1800, with Companies A and B back within the perimeter, Moore directed Diduryk to detach one platoon to Company C to assist Edwards, who had been holding the largest sector of the battalion perimeter. At about 1830, Moore decided he would need more combat power on the perimeter than in reserve. Consequently, he elected to use his recon platoon as the reserve, and he directed Diduryk to take

his remaining two platoons and occupy the northern and northeastern sectors of the perimeter between Companies B and D. Diduryk would tie-in with Company B on his left, and Company D on his right. Diduryk placed his two 81mm mortars in the 1/7 Cav mortary "battery" and dispersed some auxilliary mortarmen on the perimeter. Once in position on the perimeter, Diduryk's registered artillery and mortar fires in conjunction with the other company commanders.⁹⁸

By 1900, Moore's perimeter was secure and all weapons sited and registered.⁹⁹ Positions averaged five meters apart and all companies were tied-in with adjacent units.¹⁰⁰ The recon platoon was assembled near Moore's CP for its assignment as battalion reserve.¹⁰¹ At 1915, just prior to darkness, the day's last lift of dead and wounded were carried out to LZ Falcon and a much-needed resupply of ammunition, water, medical supplies, and rations was flown in. Anticipating Moore's need for a night landing capability, a pathfinder team from the 229th Helicopter Battalion had flown in during the late afternoon. By dusk the team had cleared a two ship night LZ at the northern end of LZ X-Ray, complete with lights.¹⁰²

Just after last light, Moore and his Command Sergeant Major, CSM Basil Plumley, walked around the entire perimeter to visit with troopers, spot-check fields of fire, and verify positions. Moore's personal

inspection of the "foxhole line" confirmed that the morale of his battalion was still high after the day's stiff fight. Facing a large, formidable NVA force, Moore's troopers had acquitted themselves well. Moore later remarked that "we know we had and could hurt the enemy badly."¹⁰³ Based on his assessment of the status of his soldiers and his evaluation of the perimeter of the battalion, Moore was satisfied that 1/7 Cav was prepared for night combat with the NVA. He also believed that with proper planning, his battalion could rescue Savage and punish the NVA during the next day's fighting. With this in mind, Moore radioed his S-3 to land at LZ X-Ray to initiate planning for offensive operations on 15 November.¹⁰⁴

High on the slopes of the Chu Pongs, BG Man was also preparing his unit for further combat with the Americans at the base of the mountain. All units in contact with the U.S. battalion were to maintain pressure on the Americans by conducting squad-size probes of the defensive positions on the LZ. Once gaps were discovered, and properly marked, Man would direct the 8th Battalion of the 66th Regiment to attack in the morning. Continued attempts would be made to entice the U.S. battalion commander to send another relief force to make contact with the isolated platoon. With his units already in ambush positions, Man hoped his opponent would try a night relief effort. Additional pressure would be exerted on

the defenders of the LZ by the arrival of the H-15 Main Force Viet Cong Battalion from the south, sometime on the 15th. As a reserve for the larger scale "lure-and-ambush" he intended to inflict on the American brigade, Man kept his battle-hardened 32d Regiment safely tucked into its assembly area, twelve kilometers away from the LZ. Man would patiently await a reinforcement column from the brigade, sent to assist the U.S. battalion on the LZ. He would then direct the 32d Regiment to strike and annihilate that reinforcing unit. Such a tactic would clearly forecast the complete isolation of the Americans at the base of the mountain, and lead to their destruction. In preparation for the daylight assault on the LZ, Man directed the 8th Battalion of the 66th Regiment to depart from its assembly area on the Ia Drang River and move to its attack position on the eastern side of the LZ.¹⁰⁵

At 2125 Dillon linked up at Moore's CP. As he discussed the situation with Dillon, Moore's thoughts were dominated by two things - saving Savage's platoon and holding on to LZ X-Ray.¹³⁸ Both Moore and Dillon were convinced that the NVA would simultaneously strike Savage and the LZ perimeter after first light. The flashing lights Dillon saw as he flew into the LZ clearly indicated the NVA were posturing on the forward slopes of the Chu Pongs for a renewed offensive. This ruled out any possibility of reaching Savage with a night attack. In

addition, since the NVA appeared to be settling into position for an overwhelming push to overrun the LZ, Moore came to the conclusion that a coordinated first-light attack by three companies would not only beat the NVA to the punch, but would regain the isolated platoon. Moore's tentative plan called for the battalion to attack in wedge formation. Herren's Company B, augmented by one platoon from Company A, would be the main effort of the attack and would be the point of the wedge formation. Echeloned left and right behind Herren in supporting roles would be, respectively, Nadal's Company A and Edwards' Company C. Moore and his command group would move behind Company B during the attack. Dillon would remain at the battalion CP on the LZ, maintaining security of the LZ with Company D and Diduryk's Company B, 2/7 Cav. Dillon would be prepared to commit at least Diduryk's Company as the battalion reserve.¹⁰⁶

Moore's battlefield planning was not accomplished in a vacuum. During the night, NVA squads probed the battalion perimeter while up on the finger, platoon size elements attempted to overrun Savage. The probing attacks on the LZ were repulsed by the registered artillery concentrations and close air support. Many of these concentrations enabled Savage to hold on.¹⁰⁷

Savage and the remnants of his platoon were hit three times during the night of 14-15 November by reinforced platoon-size NVA assault groups. The most

vicious attacks came at 0345 and 0445, often preceded by bugle calls and shouted commands which seemed to encircle the miniature perimeter. Savage defeated all attacks by adjusting artillery fires so close to his position that his men were literally lifted off the ground by the concussion of the rounds and then buried by dirt and branches. Following up rapidly with tactical air strikes, Savage ensured the survival of his platoon.¹⁰⁸

Ten minutes after first light, Moore radioed all company commanders and directed them to meet him for an orders group at the Company C command post. Moore intended to brief his commanders on the attack order for reaching Savage. He chose the CP of Company C for his orders group because it was on the southwestern edge of the LZ and provided an excellent view of the attack route and objective. Outlining the plan of attack, Moore further stipulated that all companies send patrols forward of the foxhole line to flush out NVA snipers. Also, units would sweep behind their positions to uncover any infiltrators who may have discovered a gap in perimeter defenses.¹⁰⁹

Since the orders group had been held in his CP, the commander of Company C was the first to dispatch patrols forward of his lines. Edwards' patrols moved out at about 0640, and had travelled approximately fifty meters when they were hit by heavy enemy fire. Fortunately, for the battalion as a whole, Edwards' two patrols had prematurely

triggered the assault of an NVA company that had been quietly crawling toward the LZ on hands and knees.¹¹⁰

In between the times he fired his M16 at the attacking NVA, Edwards called Moore and delivered a contact report. The situation in the Company C sector was quickly deteriorating and Edwards requested that Moore commit the battalion reserve to backstop the crumbling Company C left flank. Moore denied the request on the grounds that he believed that the attack against Edwards was not the NVA main effort. Moore knew that the NVA had sufficient forces disposed to hit the LZ with two full battalions, but he had to await a more substantial indicator as to which sector of the perimeter these forces would be committed. The best Moore could do was shift the priority of fires to Edwards.¹¹¹

Despite the heavy losses inflicted by Edwards' machineguns and the steady rain of artillery and tactical air fires, the NVA closed to hand-to-hand combat range with the Company C troopers. In the ensuing melee, Edwards was badly wounded. Again, Edwards called Moore for reinforcements, and this time the battalion commander approved the request. But Moore elected to keep his reserve - the battalion recon platoon - intact, and ordered CPT Nadal to send a platoon to Edwards' aid. It was now 0715. The fighting had raged for 45 minutes, yet only Company C was under attack. As he waited for the NVA to tip their hand as to the location of the main attack,

Moore believed that reinforcement from Company A would rectify the situation in Edwards' sector.¹¹²

A heavy cross fire soon ripped across the entire LZ. The NVA had extended the frontage of their attack and now struck the vulnerable Company D sector with a company size assault. Since Moore's small anti-tank platoon was the only unit manning the line, the NVA quickly threatened to overrun the battalion's mortar battery. At the same time Company D came under attack, Nadal sent his 2d Platoon to reinforce Company C, as directed by Moore. Within seconds the platoon was the recipient of a brutal grazing fire which swept the western edge of the LZ, and was pinned down. Nadal's platoon, stopped just a few meters behind and to the left flank of Company A and directly behind Company C's right flank, was now fortuitously positioned to defend the battalion command post.¹¹³

Moore was now under attack from three directions. Artillery concentrations and aerial rocket fires blasted the outer ring of the perimeter. To Moore, "the noise was tremendous. I have never heard before or since in two wars such a loud or continuous volume of small arms and automatic weapons fire."¹¹⁴ The situation verged on becoming desperate. NVA had pressed through the perimeter and were sniping at the battalion CP. On two occasions, Moore engaged the NVA with his M16.¹¹⁵ Enemy RPG or

mortar rounds impacted on the LZ in an attempt to bracket the battalion CP.

"Lieutenant Colonel Moore exerted a forceful, professional coolness in the midst of the confusion and near panic."¹¹⁶ Under simultaneous attack in several perimeter sectors, Moore feared that the LZ was in danger of being overrun. "It certainly entered my mind that we were the 7th Cavalry, and by God, we couldn't let happen what happened to Custer."¹¹⁷ Moore felt it was time that each company and each trooper hold his own in the spirit of Savage and his survivors on the finger. At 0745, Moore alerted the reconnaissance platoon to be prepared for possible commitment into either the Company D or Company C sector, in that priority. Next, he contacted COL Brown and appraised him of the situation. Moore also requested reinforcement with another rifle company. Brown replied that he had Company A, 2d Battalion, 7th Cavalry on strip alert at Catecka Plantation, and that they would air assault into LZ X-Ray as soon as enemy fires slackened enough to permit helicopters to land. Brown also informed Moore that Tully's 2/5 Cav was enroute by foot from LZ Victor, a mile and a half distant.¹¹⁸

Until reinforcements arrived, Moore would have use artillery and tactical air support to offset his numerical disadvantage. At 0755, Moore directed all units to throw smoke grenades forward of their positions so that all fire support platforms could begin walking concentrations

closer and closer to friendly forces. As supporting fires and aerial rockets were brought within bursting radius of Moore's troopers, some ordnance landed inside Moore's perimeter. Two misdropped napalm canisters detonated near Moore's CP, killing one soldier, burning several others, and exploding a resupply load of M16 ammunition.¹¹⁹

"During this maelstrom of activity the NVA continued to press their attack."¹²⁰ Caught in the swirling, ferocious cacophony of U.S. fire support, the NVA were following their standard "hugging tactics" in order to keep the Americans from firing final protective fires close to friendly troops. At 0800, the NVA had gotten close enough to jab at the left flank of Company A and jeopardize all of Company D's sector. The company D mortarmen were firing their M16s and mortars simultaneously as they desperately battled the approaching NVA. In danger of losing his organic fire support, Moore committed the battalion reserve to backstop the Company D sector. Moore then reconstituted his battalion reserve by directing Diduryk to assemble his company command group and one platoon near the anthill in the center of the LZ. The grazing fire which criss-crossed the LZ was so intense the Diduryk's 1st Platoon sustained two casualties before it even began moving toward Moore's CP.¹²¹

By 0900 the sheer volume of American firepower around the LZ stalled the NVA advance. With the LZ reasonably free of NVA direct fire, Moore called his

brigade commander and asked for the reinforcements to land. As soon as the lead elements of Company A, 2/7 Cav touched down, Moore directed the company commander, CPT Joel E. Sugdinis, to occupy Diduryk's former position on the perimeter. This move brought Diduryk's remaining platoon into the center of the LZ to give Moore a two-platoon battalion reserve. Enemy fires around the perimeter began to slacken proportionally so that by 1000 only sporadic NVA sniping harassed Moore's positions. The NVA appeared to be breaking contact and withdrawing.¹²²

With the NVA pressure momentarily abated, Moore made an assessment of his dispositions. The Company C sector, originally a four-platoon slice of the perimeter, was being held by just one platoon. Moore directed Diduryk to take his two full platoons and assume responsibility for the Company C sector. Moore then augmented Diduryk's combat power with the 3d Platoon of the newly arrived and fresh Company A, 2/7 Cav. Moore once again reconstituted his battalion reserve by moving the remnants of Edwards' hard-pressed Company C to the center of the LZ.¹²³

At 1205, Tully's 2/5 Cav reached the perimeter at LZ X-Ray. Although the overland movement of Tully's battalion failed to achieve COL Brown's optimistic plan to trap NVA units between Moore's stationary force and Tully's moving force, the link-up relieved much of the danger at LZ X-Ray.¹²⁴

Now that Tully's 2/5 Cav was completely within the perimeter, Brown made Moore the commander of all ground forces in the LZ. With the command arrangements taken care of, Moore and Tully discussed the next move. Moore's attention was now focused on the relief of Savage's outpost on the finger. Since Tully's battalion was still configured in attack formation, and was reasonably fresh, Moore planned to conduct an immediate sweep to the northwest to reach Savage. Tully would command the relief column attacking to reach Savage. Moore would remain on the LZ in overall charge of the operation.¹²⁵

Preceded by a short but intense artillery and aerial rocket prep, Tully's force departed the perimeter at 1315. Within an hour of leaving the LZ, Herren reached Savage's perimeter. Seventy dead NVA lay in crumpled heaps around Savage's position. Unbelievably, the isolated platoon had not had an additional fatality during the twenty-four hours Savage was in command. The platoon had been saved, according to Moore, "by guts and Sergeant Savage."¹²⁶

With the return of Tully's relief column to the landing zone, at 1500, Moore decided to reposition his combat power on the perimeter. Now in charge of two battalions, Moore concluded that he needed a simple, logical, and combat effective task organization for the defense of the LZ. With this in mind, Moore bisected the perimeter and placed Tully's 2/5 Cav on the northeastern

half while he maintained the southwestern half with his battalion and Companies A and B, 2/7 Cav. This arrangement ensured unity of effort and tactical integrity of each battalion in the event of renewed NVA attacks. For the rest of the afternoon of 15 November, Moore directed the evacuation of the dead and wounded and supervised the preparation of night defensive positions.¹²⁷

Although BG Man's units had suffered heavy losses in the first thirty-six hours of the battle at LZ X-Ray, the 4th Field Front commander was not yet ready to give up the fight. He directed his disciplined soldiers to conduct night time probes of the LZ in order to find gaps in the perimeter for a pre-dawn attack. Man reasoned that the Americans would not expect any additional attempts to overrun the LZ.

Throughout the early hours of the evening, Man's soldiers kept up sporadic sniper fire around the LZ to give the appearance that the NVA force was withdrawing. All night long, the artillery batteries from LZ Falcon kept up an incessant ring of fire around the perimeter. At 0100 five NVA soldiers were discovered as they probed the northwestern sector of the perimeter manned by Herren's Company B. In an abrupt exchange of gunfire the NVA fled, leaving behind two dead. For the next three hours there were no additional probes of the perimeter. At 0400, though, a series of short and long whistle

signals was heard from out in front of the sector held by Diduryk's Company B, 2/7 Cav - the same sector occupied twenty-four hours earlier by Edwards' Company C, 1/7 Cav. At about 0422 trip flares were ignited and anti-intrusion devices were sprung approximately 300 meters from Diduryk's position. In the glare of the ground illumination, a company-size NVA assault struck the entire width of Diduryk's sector. The attack was finally broken up by a fusillade of small arms fire and the imaginative adjustment of four batteries of artillery shooting high explosive and white phosphorous shells with variable time fuses.¹²⁸

The NVA attempted another attack at 0530. Coming out of the south and west, the NVA resorted to human wave tactics as they pressed against Diduryk's 3d Platoon. By dawn this attack was also defeated. Outside Diduryk's positions, NVA bodies lay in heaps and mounds. In front of one position NVA dead were stacked so high that Diduryk's troopers had to move them to achieve a clear field of fire.¹²⁹

Well aware of what was happening in Diduryk's sector of the perimeter, Moore was concerned about where the NVA main effort would strike his exhausted troopers. Diduryk had ably handled what Moore judged was a deliberate, set-piece diversionary attack executed repetitively in order to draw attention from an infiltrating main attack. Not unlike the morning of the

15th, the skilled, disciplined NVA would take advantage of the terrain bordering the LZ to crawl within hand grenade range of U.S. positions before attacking. To prevent this, at 0655 Moore directed all units to fire "a mad minute" of all weapons systems at trees, anthills, and bushes in front of their positions. Within seconds the "mad minute" produced results - a forty-man NVA platoon which had crept to within 150 meters of the positions of Company A, 2/7 Cav was forced to attack prematurely. A heavy dose of artillery fire decimated the infiltrators. All around the perimeter, snipers fell dead from trees.¹³⁰

After the mad minute was completed, Moore turned his attention to a matter that had disturbed him for over twenty-four hours: three American casualties were unaccounted for - a situation Moore found unpalatable. To Moore, a commander was responsible for returning from a combat action with every trooper he had taken into the fight. This responsibility included the evacuation of wounded and recovery of dead soldiers. During the brief lull that followed the mad minute, Moore dispatched the battalion reserve (consisting of the recon platoon and the remnants of Company C) to sweep the interior of the perimeter for the missing troopers. The search, much to Moore's chagrin, failed to locate the three men.¹³¹

At 0930, lead elements of another of COL Brown's reinforcements reached LZ X-Ray. LTC Robert McDade's 2/7

Cav, augmented with Company A of LTC Fred Ackerson's 1/5 Cav, reached Moore's perimeter after a five-mile trek by foot from LZ Columbus. The arrival of McDade's battalion signalled that Moore's fight for LZ X-Ray was coming to a close. But Hal Moore still had unfinished business to conduct. At 0955 he directed that all units conduct a coordinated sweep to their front to a distance of 500 meters. Moore felt this tactic could accomplish two primary objectives: (1) it would spoil the attack of any fresh NVA units which had converged on the LZ during the night; and (2) it would clear out the survivors of the NVA pre-dawn assaults and preclude the vulnerable LZ from being attacked during the relief-in-place between Moore and the Tully/McDade force.¹³²

Company B, 2/7 Cav had swept only 50-75 meters in front of its positions when it was hit by a large volume of fire. In an instant Diduryk lost ten casualties. Under cover of artillery fire, Diduryk withdrew his company back to its perimeter positions. There he was met by Moore and LT Hastings, the battalion's Forward Air Controller (FAC). In a matter of minutes, Hastings brought in two fighter-bombers who unloaded Napalm, cluster bombs, rockets, and a 500-pound bomb on top of the NVA ambush. Diduryk then rallied his company and renewed the sweep. Moving behind "a wall of artillery fire", Diduryk quickly eliminated the last of the NVA in his sector. Continuing his sweep past the twenty-seven

recently killed NVA soldiers, Diduryk came across the bodies of the battalion's missing troopers.¹³³

On the mountain side, above LZ X-Ray, BG Man conceded that the U.S. perimeter was "a nut too tough to crack."¹³⁴ Just before he had committed the 8th Battalion of the 66th Regiment in a final assault against the perimeter of the LZ, Man decided to re-orient his combat power onto the highly vulnerable American artillery batteries at LZ Falcon. Late in the morning of 16 November, BG Man ordered the 8th Battalion to march eastward and link-up with the H-15 Main Force Viet Cong Battalion to strike LZ Falcon. To cover this move, NVA units still in contact with the Americans on the LZ were ordered to maintain just enough pressure on the U.S. forces to keep them bottled up at the base of the mountain. For the 4th Field Front, the battle for LZ X-Ray was over, and it was time to move on to more lucrative targets.¹³⁵

As the action around the perimeter dwindled to dulcatory sniper fire, Moore consolidated his battalion for its helicopter movement to Pleiku. He had every reason to be proud of the accomplishments of his battalion in the face of such overwhelming odds. As his men stacked large piles of NVA weapons and equipment in the center of the LZ, Moore took stock of the cost of the fierce battle with the NVA. Moore's casualties for the three days fighting, attached units included, were 79 killed, 121

wounded, and none missing. In fighting that was frequently hand-to-hand and nearly always within hand grenade range, Moore's troopers killed 634 NVA known dead and 581 estimated dead and captured six prisoners.¹³⁶

At about 1400, LTC Tully assumed operational command of the forces at LZ X-Ray. But Hal Moore and his battalion were once again encircled, this time by a Chinook - load of reporters, film crews, and news personalities flown in by the 1st Cav Division's Public Information Officer. In the midst of the media frenzy, Moore articulated how "brave men and this little black gun (the recently issued M16 rifle) won this victory."¹³⁷ For the commander who would not leave the battlefield until every member of his battalion was accounted for, it was the individual soldiers and their incredible skill and determination which defeated the NVA. "I've got men in body bags today," Moore said, "that had less than a week to go in the Army. These men fought all the way; they never gave an inch."¹³⁸

Late in the afternoon, after his entire battalion had been extracted, LTC Harold G. Moore finally boarded a helicopter for the ride to Pleiku. It was a fitting gesture for the commander of 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry at LZ X-Ray: very nearly the first man in the battalion to land on the LZ, he was certainly the last man to leave.¹³⁹

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COMMUNICATIONS			
BE A GOOD LISTENER	1	1	1
COMMUNICATE INTENT CLEARLY	4	4	4
COMMUNICATE NONVERBALLY	4	1	2
COMMUNICATE ENTHUSIASM	3	1	3
COMMUNICATE ORDERS CLEARLY	4	4	4
COMMUNICATE STANDARDS	4	2	4
COMMUNICATE UP, DOWN, HORIZONTALLY	4	2	4
OBTAIN FEEDBACK	1	1	1
STRESS SIMPLICITY	4	4	4

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER SUPERVISE	LTC VANDERYOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COMMAND FORWARD	3	4	4
DON'T OVER-SUPERVISE	3	4	3
ENFORCE SAFETY STANDARDS	0	0	0
ESTABLISH CONTROLS	2	3	1
ESTABLISH/ENFORCE STANDARDS	0	0	1
FOLLOW-UP ON CORRECTIVE ACTION	0	0	1
PROVIDE FEEDBACK	0	1	1

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMPETENCY

COMMANDER TEACH. AND COUNSELING	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COACH/COUNSEL SUBORDINATES	3	1	1
DEMAND ACTION	3	4	4
DEVELOP SUBORDINATES	3	1	1
TEACH SKILLS	1	1	1
TRAIN FOR WAR	1	1	1
USE AWARDS AND DISCIPLINE SYSTEM	4	0	1

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
ACCEPT HONEST MISTAKES	1	1	1
BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE UNIT	4	3	4
CREATE STRONG UNIT IDENTITY	4	3	4
DEMONSTRATE CARING	3	1	4
DEMONS. TRUST	4	4	4
DEVELOP COOP. AND TEAMWORK	1	4	1
DEVELOP SUBORD. TO REPLACE YOU	1	1	1
SHOW CONFIDENCE IN SELF/TEAM	4	3	4
ENCOURAGE BOLDNESS	4	4	4
ENCOURAGE CANDOR	4	4	1

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER SOLDIER TEAM	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
DEVELOPMENT			
ENCOURAGE			
SPEEDY ACTION	4	4	4
GENERATE UNIT COHESION	4	3	4
INCLUDE SUBORD. LEADERS IN DECISION-MAKING	1	1	3
INSTILL DESIRE	4	4	4
PROVIDE TOUGH, REPETITIVE, EXACTING TNG.	4	1	1
TRAIN LEADER TEAMS	1	1	1

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

<div> <div>COMMANDER</div> <div>TECH. / TACTICAL PROFICIENCY</div> </div>	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
	APPLY TENETS OF AIRLAND BATTLE DOCTRINE	3	4
	IMPLEMENT THE AIRLAND BATTLE IMPERATIVES	2	4
	EMPLOY BATTLEFIELD OPERATING SYSTEMS	3	4

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
DECISION- MAKING			
ACCEPT PRUDENT RISKS IN SUBORD.	4	4	4
BE ASSERTIVE	4	3	4
BE CREATIVE	4	2	4
DELEGATE AUTH./ MATCH RESPONS.	4	4	4
IMPLEMENT PLAN	4	4	4
IMPROVISE	4	2	4
INCLUDE ALL LEADERS IN DECISION-MAKING	1	1	3
TAKE APPROP. ACTION IN THE ABSENCE/ORDERS	4	1	3
TAKE CALCULATED RISKS	4	3	4
TAKE DECISIVE ACTION	4	4	4

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

<div>COMMANDER</div> <div>DECISION- MAKING</div> <div>USE AND EXPECT GOOD JUDGMENT</div>	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
	4	4	4

COMPETENCY

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
PLANNING			
ADJUST ACCORD. TO SITUATION	1	2	4
BE ADAPTABLE	3	2	4
ESTABLISH CLEAR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4	4	4
ESTABLISH SENSE COMMON PURPOSE FOR THE UNIT	4	4	4
ESTABLISH COURSES OF ACTION TO MEET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	4	3	4
ORGANIZE	4	4	4
PLAN BEYOND INITIAL OPS.	1	1	1

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

<div> <div>COMMANDER</div> <div>USE AVAILABLE SYSTEMS</div> </div>	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
	APPROPRIATELY FILTER INFO. TO SUBORDINATES	0	0
	ACTIVELY SEEK NEEDED INFO.	0	0
	MANAGE RESOURCES (TIME, PEOPLE, INFO., THINGS)	0	0

COMPETENCY

LEGEND:
 4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstrated Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

COMMANDER	LTC VONDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
PROFESS.			
ETHICS			
ACCEPT	4	4	4
RESPONSIBILITY			
BE POLE MODEL	4	4	4
BE CANDID	4	1	3
BE PHYSICALLY			
FIT	4	1	3
DEMONSTRATE			
APPEARING	3	4	4
DEMONSTRATE			
COMPASSION	4	1	4
DEMONSTRATE			
COURAGE	4	4	4
DEMONSTRATE			
INTEGRITY	4	4	4
DEMONSTRATE			
MATURITY	4	4	4
DEMONSTRATE			
SELF-DISCIPLINE	4	1	4

Analysis and Conclusions

Seven days after the Battle of LZ X-Ray, LTC Hal Moore was promoted to Colonel, awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his gallant leadership of 1/7 Cav at LZ X-Ray, and assigned as Commander, 3d Brigade, 1st Cav Division. COL Moore commanded the 3d Brigade through several major engagements until he returned in the United States in late July, 1966.

The performance of Hal Moore and his tough, intrepid battalion at LZ X-Ray is one of the most documented accounts of battalion-level combat in recent military history. There is no denying the fact that Moore's command of his battalion in the bloody cauldron named LZ X-Ray is a tremendous example of a successful leader firmly in control of his unit. For future combat battalion commanders, the narrative of Moore's leadership during the decisive three-day engagement provides a veritable gold mine of "lessons learned". Especially instructive are the skills of command of battalions in combat which readily appear in an examination of Moore's performance in conjunction with the leadership competency/performance indicator model.

COMMUNICATIONS

Moore stands out as an extremely effective communicator. While his style has been described as flamboyant,¹⁴⁰ Moore clearly displayed knowledge of information by properly implementing the commander's

intent. Moore believed the concept of commander's intent was a fundamental. This is perfect evidence of the philosophy of the 1st Cav Division Commander, MG Kinnard, who routinely articulated his intent along with mission orders to subordinates. Moore and his immediate superior, COL Brown, discussed intent when Brown issued Moore his orders for the air assault into the Ia Drang Valley. Moore passed this intent down to his company commanders during his operations order on 14 November. As in previous chapters, it is not possible to assess to what degree Moore was a Good Listener. Back brief information and provide feedback on what was briefed are, as has been shown in the previous leader assessments, particularly difficult indicators to analyze. There is evidence to support the performance indicator respond to subordinates' input. From the start of the planning of the operation, Moore accepted the opinions of subordinates and used them to formulate plans. He relied heavily on the input of his S-3, CPT Dillon, during the planning of the three company attack on 15 November. He accepted the report of the reconnaissance helicopter section leader to help him confirm LZ X-Ray. There had even been a discussion about the choice of LZ immediately following the leaders' recon on the morning of 14 November. During the fighting on LZ X-Ray, Moore took into account the observations and assessments of CPTs Nadal, Edwards, Herren, and Diduryk.

For LTC Moore, it was imperative for a battalion commander in combat to Clearly Communicate His Intent. It is reasonable to conclude that every subordinate leader on LZ X-Ray during the three days of fighting knew that Moore intended to attack the enemy, save the LZ, rescue Savage, and account for all personnel before extraction. Moore frequently changed the missions of his companies, but regardless of the circumstances, they all knew his intent.

Because of his personality type, Moore communicated verbally as opposed to Nonverbally. This does not mean that Moore's words spoke louder than his actions. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. It just means that because of his general affability, Moore was often prone to expressing himself verbally in order to reinforce his actions. He communicated face-to-face with subordinates whenever practicable during the fight at LZ X-Ray. It was also the way he preferred to do business with superiors.

Moore's actions within the perimeter of LZ X-Ray during those three days in November 1965 complemented/ reinforced unit standards and demonstrated a sense of urgency without panic. On LZ X-Ray, 14-16 November, there was no question as to who was in charge. Hal Moore was in command and his actions, just like those of the combat battalion commanders in the previous chapters, are indicative of a conscious adherence to a type of mental checklist displaying the dynamics of taking care of leader

business in combat. Moore demonstrated, by force of personal example, how the standards his unit developed during the training and testing of the airmobility concept would be applied on the battlefield. Airmobile commanders, Moore showed went into the proposed landing zone on the initial lift and were usually some of the first leaders on the ground. Commanders directed the influx of subsequent lifts based on the situation. Commanders called for and orchestrated the employment of combined arms on the battlefield. Commanders situated themselves at a point from which they could see the entire battlefield. Commanders remained aware of the status of wounded soldiers and ensured all casualties were promptly evacuated. Commanders never left casualties on the battlefield; every man into action was brought back out - dead, wounded, or, hopefully, uninjured.

Along with this, Moore demonstrated a sense of urgency without panic by exerting a cool, professionalism throughout many instances of potential panic on the LZ. He and CSM Plumley shot and killed NVA who had infiltrated within hand grenade range of the battalion CP. They helped load wounded on helicopters. Moore was calm and forceful in his radio communications even as heavy NVA automatic weapons fires wounded personnel in his CP and an errant napalm canister exploded stacked cases of rifle ammo near the CP. Moore took care of leader business in

combat. His single minded tenacity and his personal example permeated the ranks of his battalion.

Moore Communicated Enthusiasm during his pre-operations planning and troop leading procedures and once he was on the LZ. His excitement at Company B's discovery of the NVA deserter and the subsequent intel gathered from the prisoner fired the enthusiasm of the entire organization. As seen during his inspection of the perimeter on 14 November, Moore articulated his enthusiasm for the prospects of success to the lowest level as frequently as was practicable.

Moore Clearly Communicated Orders in a manner which was fundamentally sound and doctrinally correct. His pre-operational planning inculcated the intent of both the division commander and the brigade commander and was based on a solid intelligence preparation of the battlefield and mission analysis. Moore's plan was simple, took into account the guidance of his superiors and, perhaps most instructive, it was especially flexible. Moore's plan was devised to Stress Simplicity. Analogous to the football quarterback who calls an audible to change a pre-set play at the line of scrimmage, Moore likewise fashioned his assault plan to enable him to look at the terrain, size-up the enemy, assess his own troops, check the time available, and maintain mission focus. Moore could, and did, call audibles at the line of scrimmage; in fact, he called several, as is evidenced by the change in

in missions of his companies once in contact with the NVA.

To take the analogy a step or two further, Moore was fortunate to have coaches (superiors) who allowed him to call his own plays in the huddle as long as they complemented the game plan (intent). This attitude was influenced by MG Kinnard's philosophy of allowing subordinates the latitude to fight the battles and make decisions on the ground. It was a direct product of the spirit of airborne warfare which demanded that subordinate commanders exercise independence of action.

Moore excelled because he knew what end state his superiors wanted him to achieve with his operation and because he was capable of DEFINING SUCCESS for his company commanders: find the elusive NVA, fix them, attack them, defeat them; rescue Savage, defend the LZ, sweep the perimeter, police the battlefield, win.

Moore Communicated Up, Down, and Horizontally throughout the battle. He was in constant radio communications with COL Brown. He was in constant communications with his company commanders, issuing orders face-to-face or via radio. He even maintained communications with SSG Savage during the darkest period of that platoon's isolation. He talked constantly with his S-3, CPT Dillon, who functioned from the command and control helicopter. Lastly, Moore communicated with his soldiers. As he "trooped the line" with CSM Plumley on

the night 14 November, Moore assessed the morale and fighting ability of his unit through his conversations with his soldiers.

SUPERVISE

How does LTC Moore rate as a supervisor of his battalion in combat?

First of all, Moore Commanded Forward. He was virtually the first soldier of his battalion to land on LZ X-Ray. From that moment on he stayed on the LZ, and did not leave until all of his battalion had been extracted by helicopter to Pleiku. Throughout the three days of fighting Moore shared hardships with subordinates, led by example, spent time with his soldiers, and personally inspected selected tasks accomplished by subordinates. Moore did not hover above the battlefield in a command helicopter. He was on the ground, fighting next to his soldiers.

In Commanding Forward, Moore located his command post where he could best influence the action and remain in positive control of the fight. He situated his CP behind a huge anthill in the center of the LZ, and it remained there throughout the battle. On a couple of occasions Moore positioned himself at decisive sectors of the perimeter. He moved to Herren's location on the morning of 14 November in response to the capture of the NVA deserter. There he issued Herren the warning order for a future change in Company B's mission. At dusk on

the 14th Moore and CSM Plubley inspected the perimeter and talked to soldiers. Moore returned to his CP after the inspection tour with the feeling that his soldiers' morale was high and that they were capable of out-fighting the NVA. This assessment formed the basis for Moore's actions during the next thirty-six hours.

On the morning of 15 November Moore called his commanders to an orders group at Edwards' Company C command post. This site was chosen so that the commanders of the proposed three-company assault could observe the axis of advance and the objective, both plainly visible from the Company C positions. Then on the morning of 16 November, Moore was back in the same location, this time to get a first-hand glimpse of what had occurred in CPT Diduryk's sector at first light. There, in the old Company C positions, Moore and his Forward Air Controller directed fighter-bomber attacks on NVA infiltrators.

Late in the morning of 16 November, after the arrival of Tully's 2/5 Cav, Moore was responsible for commanding and controlling ten companies of infantry. As Tully moved out to rescue Savage, Moore remained at his CP near the anthill, in overall command of the LZ.

Moore Did Not Over-Supervise. He gave subordinates mission-type orders, a direct reflection of the confidence Moore had in his subordinates. Without this type of approach, Moore would never have been able to

affect the rapid changes in company missions as he did on LZ X-Ray.

When he gave mission orders to his company commanders Moore insured that they understood what success would look like. Herren's assumption of the Company C mission was predicated on creating a buffer zone between the mountains and the LZ in order to secure the LZ for follow-on lifts. Moore explained this to Herren. Then, when Herren's Company B was held up on the finger, and Herrick was surrounded, Moore sent Nadal to Herren's aid. Success for Nadal in this mission would be, according to Moore, the recovery of the isolated platoon. In that Nadal could not accomplish that mission, and recognized that success was beyond his capability, Moore switched to the plan to use Companies A and B in a combined attack to reach Herrick. Success again was the rescue of the platoon. Nadal went to dramatic lengths to insure his company understood what success would be for the two company attack. When the attack faltered in the face of overwhelming NVA fires, and could not succeed, Nadal requested permission to withdraw to the perimeter. Moore agreed and for the rest of the night, success for Hal Moore was LZ security. He articulated success to his soldiers during his twilight inspection of the perimeter.

As has been mentioned in previous chapters, Enforce Safety Standards leans more toward peacetime training restrictions than "fire control measures", "command and

control of direct and indirect fires", "orchestration of tactical air support", and "protection of troops". Moore's deliberate use of indirect fires within minimum safe distance range to friendly troops was an enormous risk to his soldiers yet it repelled countless NVA assaults. Savage's employment on artillery 25 meters from his perimeter demonstrated that accurate artillery fires may be adjusted to within hand grenades range. Moore used WP rounds to mask the withdrawal of Companies A and B on 14 November, a clear hazard to troops. Napalm and 500-pound bombs were also incorporated into the fire support and were professionally executed.

The issue of Enforcing Safety Standards revolves around training and trust. Moore knew that he could emplace artillery concentrations within minimum safe distance range because he knew the artillerymen were well trained and that his forward observers in the battalion could handle the task. Moore personally called for and adjusted numerous artillery concentrations but in most cases it was company forward observers requesting and adjusting multiple fire support assets. For future battalion commanders, the salient point is that observed fire training is mandatory for forward observers at company and platoon level. In this age of dwindling resources for artillery and mortar live fire, future battalion commanders will have to be particularly imaginative in the development of training events which

will provide the chain of command with the essential trust necessary for danger-close adjustments.

LTC Hal Moore effectively supervised subordinates.

In terms of assessing the remaining SKA Establish Controls, Establish/Enforce Standards, Follow-Up on Corrective Action, and Provide Feedback, few of the performance indicators seem to apply to supervising combat activities. For example, it may be stretching the point to say that Moore checked to ensure standard compliance and conducted performance evaluations. Indeed, his tour of the foxhole line on the evening of 14 November was intended to insure the over-arching performance standards for a defensive perimeter were being followed. However, the leadership competency performance indicators don't focus on critical tasks such as "assess morale of the organization", "assess combat power", or "assess the ability of the organization to execute continuous operations." These tasks were the part of Moore's inspection trip that night that cannot be considered as segments of an unannounced review of standards of compliance.

TEACHING AND COUNSELING

Did LTC Moore coach/counsel subordinates on LZ X-Ray? In spite of the training orientation of many of the LPI which constitute the SKA of this competency, it would be fair to assess that Moore did some coaching and counseling on LZ X-Ray. Just how much he did is difficult

to judge given the depth of the source material. Certainly, Moore Demanded Action on the battlefield. He provided advice and direction to subordinates in many instances during the three days on LZ X-Ray. It is arguable as to what degree Moore was able to Develop Subordinates and Teach Skills while in contact with the enemy. These SKA, plus Train for War, are pre-combat activities and post-combat training actions. Other than making an adjustment in dispositions or making a decision to change the condition of combat (attack instead of defend, etc.), the amount of corrective action taken on the battlefield, short of relief of a leader, seems to be minimal. There is no mention in the source material of Hal Moore conducting "footlocker counseling" of subordinates on LZ X-Ray. Moore's situation, not unlike the circumstance confronting Vandervoort and Lynch, was an environment where the time span between recognizing "bad performance" and executing "corrective action" was measured in friendly KIA or WIA.

SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Hal Moore's story is one of a battalion which fought as it had been trained. Moore was so confident of this fact that he boasted that his unit was as well-trained and well-disciplined as the U.S. airborne divisions in WWII. Accepting Moore's proclivity for invoking the traditional and philosophical connection between his unit and the tremendous paratroop battalions,

it is especially important to examine how Moore trained his unit and developed such a high standard of cohesion. While the objective of this study is not to conduct an in-depth analysis of the training methods of 1/7 Cav or the 1st Cavalry Division (which in itself is a premise for another thesis), Moore's focus on cohesion requires description.

Essentially, Moore created a strong unit identity by emphasizing tradition and pride in the unit and by demanding that leaders and teams have common goals. It was absolutely imperative in Moore's battalion that junior leaders actively team up with the NCOs who were veterans of light infantry combat in Korea and seek to learn as much as possible about small unit fighting. The corollary was that Moore's NCOs were also required to "adopt a lieutenant" and train the neophyte junior leaders. For a combat team to develop and then function under fire, there was no room for an adversarial relationship between officers and NCOs. Nor is there room for such an attitude in today's light infantry battalions. Moore's philosophy of cohesion unequivocally points out that the genesis of successful unit performance in combat occurs in the training and garrison environments where cooperation and teamwork is the standard. The overt demonstration of trust, caring, and confidence, up and down the chain of command, was mandatory behavior in 1/7 Cav. So must it be in the infantry battalions of the 1990s. Failure to

implement a Hal Moore style of cohesion-building robs a unit of its potential SSG Savage-type enlisted soldiers. The inability of many infantry battalions to develop subordinates to replace key leaders is no more dramatically demonstrated than at the various CTC's. Frequently, units begin to flounder after the officer or senior NCO is declared a casualty. At risk of overstating the case, how many squad leaders in battalions today can assume command of a platoon as Savage did and repel repeated assaults by two enemy companies? Or how many NCOs could assume command of a company as SSG George Gonzales did with Company D?

Moore developed his soldier and leader teams by Encouraging Boldness, Candor, Initiative, Innovation, and Speedy Action. He relied on his company commanders, platoon leaders, and squad leaders to boldly execute his plans and orders. He expected his leaders to demonstrate moral courage and freely inform him when mistakes are made or when operations have failed. Herren's report that Herrick had been isolated by a large NVA force is an example. Nadal's request to withdraw the two-company attack force is another instance of subordinate candor. Edwards' radio message that the mortar battery had not yet been formed was another illustration of candor.

Initiative was exercised all over the LZ during the three days of fighting. NCOs took charge of units when officers were killed or wounded. The actions of SSG Clyde

E. Savage is the preeminent model of initiative. Marm's personal gallantry in silencing the NVA machinegun that completely halted Company A is one more case in point. Edwards' organization of the mortar battery and his use of SSG Gonzales' Company D in his defensive sector is another example. CPT Dillon's targeting of the blinking lights in the Chu Pongs on the night of 14 November is a good example of subordinate initiative.

Perhaps the most Innovative leader on the battlefield was the battalion commander. Moore's reaction to several situations during the course of the fighting were not only innovative but also indicative of his ability to take speedy action. First and foremost is Moore's imaginative and innovative employment of fire support assets. He integrated every conceivable fire support platform into the fighting: tac air, aerial rocket artillery, helicopter gunships, artillery, and his mortar battery. He used white phosphorous rounds to mask the withdrawal of Nadal and Herren from NVA observation and fire. He directed the execution of the "mad minute" to clear the perimeter of snipers and infiltrating NVA assault echelons, a technique which paid enormous dividends.

Moore was also innovative in the maneuver arena. His air movement plan which called for a battalion LZ was different. His plan for the initial security of the LZ - Herren's one platoon sweep - was a departure from

doctrine. His frequent alteration and modification of company missions is not only an example of innovation but points to the exceptional responsiveness of his organization. Moore's innovative scheme of attachment and cross-attachment highlights the interoperability of his platoons and companies - an achievement worthy of emulation by future battalion commanders. His ability to smoothly assimilate the two reinforcing companies from 2/7 Cav and Tully's entire 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry into his operations is also a remarkable achievement.

Moore was also innovative in logistics. First of all, he deliberately lightened the load of his soldiers going into battle. Emphasizing the absolute necessity to carry an increased combat load of ammunition, Moore provided his battalion with sufficient resources to fight outnumbered, in the early hours of the battle. This did not preclude ammunition resupply but it gave his units an advantage in terms of expenditure and replenishment. What is most instructive in this instance is that Moore did not overburden his soldiers with a "packing list" for combat which included unnecessary items of equipment. While it may be arguable to what degree Moore's soldiers were light and highly mobile when on the ground, they were certainly not outfitted like the jungle-bashing, ruck-sack-laden "pack mules" of infantry battalions in the latter years of the war. Similar to the NVA, Moore confined his individual soldier loads to ammunition, water, and one

day's ration (C rations were stuffed in GI socks and tied-off on a soldier's load bearing equipment). Interestingly enough, no ruck sacks are visible in photos of Moore's soldiers on LZ X-Ray. (For that matter, ruck sacks or packs are not visible in pictures of Vandervoort's paratroopers or Lynch's infantrymen either). For future battalion commanders of "ruck sack infantry", Moore's example of simplified combat logistics, driven by METT-T, may be worthy of a "try out" during training exercises.

On LZ X-Ray, LTC Hal Moore encouraged and exemplified the dynamic of Speedy Action in decision-making. Crucial to the ability to make rapid decisions on the battlefield is the knowledge that: (1) decision-making process of the commander and his subordinate leaders can effectively and rapidly respond to directives from the senior leader during a fluid situation; and (3) subordinates often anticipate the desires of the senior and have already taken steps toward fulfilling the organizational goal. The foundation for these conditions lies in Tough, Repetitive, Exacting Training.

Hal Moore fought at LZ X-Ray with subordinate leaders who had been with him for over a year. For example, Nadal, Herren, Edwards and LeFebvre had all served with 1/7 Cav during the training and testing days of the airmobility concept at Ft. Benning. All were

commanding companies for Hal Moore in 1964. Most of the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants were also veterans of the Ft. Benning train-up. Many squad leaders had been in Moore's battalion for over a year, but assignment rotations had begun to whittle away at junior NCOs prior to the fight at LZ X-Ray. The bottom line is that Moore had a battalion whose leaders were familiar with one another, had trained one another, and had made decisions together. Cohesive, trained to a very high standard during the air assault testing period at Ft. Benning, Moore's leaders were used to making independent decisions and providing input to larger organizational decisions.

When bullets began flying on LZ X-Ray, Moore knew he had leaders who clearly understood his thought processes and could rapidly respond to changes in the situation. Moore's "team" had been trained to such a high level of sophistication that he could expect them to know the missions of adjacent units, accept rapid attachment or detachment of units from other companies or battalions, and employ an amazing array of fire support platforms. Simply, Hal Moore trained his leaders and his battalion as he expected it to fight.

TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL COMPETENCY

LTC Hal Moore conducted successful combat operations on LZ X-Ray. His actions are a formative illustration of a battalion commander Applying the Tenets of AirLand Battle Doctrine, Implementing the AirLand

Battle Imperatives, and Employing Battlefield Operating Systems. Hal Moore personally exhibited Technical and Tactical Competency on a scale which included, one one end, engaging the enemy with an individual weapon and, on the other end, directing the employment of multiple fire support assets.

Moore's employment of his battalion on LZ X-Ray demonstrated agility. His frequent adjustments in company missions is a solid example of agility on the battlefield. His agility in employing attached rifle companies and a reinforcing battalion is remarkable. Successfully engaging the NVA on three fronts is also indicative of Moore's agility.

Moore demonstrated initiative throughout his operation at LZ X-Ray. His air movement plan and his new technique for securing the LZ are examples of initiatives taken by Moore. He took the initiative to seek contact with the NVA after the discovery of the deserter. It is arguable as to what degree Moore maintained initiative in the fight with the NVA. An opposing case may be made that Moore did not maintain the initiative after the first contact with the NVA and only reacted to situations in which the NVA chose the time and place of the attack. In his defense, Moore may be seen as maintaining the initiative in terms of his ability to maneuver on the LZ, conduct spoiling attacks, bring in reinforcements, and eventually police the battlefield.

The depth of Moore's defense of LZ X-Ray is also subject to interpretation. Moore strongpointed the LZ with a perimeter defense. Units manned positions on the perimeter line, with no listening posts or observation posts forward in their sectors. Savage and his isolated platoon do not constitute a forward-echeloned force. The reserve he maintained near his battalion CP was virtually the only depth he had to his defense.

Unless vertical depth is considered. Moore's aerial fire support provided him with the margin of depth that his manpower and dispositions could not give him on the LZ. There is no question that Moore used his vertical depth to its maximum capability.

Moore's synchronization of available combat power throughout the battle is especially instructive. He orchestrated fire support to synchronize with maneuver of ground troops. He directed air movements to coincide with fire support. He integrated casualty evacuation with air movements and close air support. He brought in logistic resupply in conjunction with troop lifts. Without a doubt, Moore's ability to synchronize different types of fire support systems and ordnance to form a "ring of steel" around his perimeter stands out as a predominant example of synchronization on LZ X-Ray.

Moore's Implementation of AirLand Battle Imperatives at LZ X-Ray was dynamic. From the inception of the operation, Moore ensured unity of effort by

providing purpose, direction, and motivation to his battalion and his attacked units. Moore was in charge of the battle from the start, and he only relinquished control of the perimeter when he was convinced the bulk of the NVA forces had withdrawn.

Moore was especially good at anticipating events on the battlefield. In the majority of cases, Moore was able to implement dispositions or make a decision in advance of the NVA activity. His "anti-infiltration" patrols in front of the perimeter forced NVA units to prematurely initiate their attacks. His "mad minute" compromised a major NVA attempt to overrun the LZ. His two-company spoiling attack on 14 November pre-empted an NVA assault. His reinforcement of the threatened Company C sector with Lane's platoon strengthened Edwards at a time just before a two-company NVA attack.

Moore concentrated combat power against enemy vulnerabilities mainly by directing an incredible array of indirect fire on NVA attacks. Fire support was his primary combat multiplier in the engagement, and he took advantage of his superiority in this regard.

Moore's troop movements at LZ X-Ray is a classic example of the imperative designate, sustain, and shift the main effort. For the initial air assault, Herren's Company B was the main effort, reinforced with the requisite priority of fires. Though Herren's mission changed almost immediately upon touchdown on LZ X-Ray, he

remained the battalion main effort. When Herren ran into trouble on the finger Moore sustained him by sending Nadal in to help. During the two-company attack to reach Savage, Moore shifted the main effort to Nadal. This remained in effect as the two units withdrew to the perimeter.

Edwards' Company C was the main effort during most of 15 November. This remained the case until Diduryk's company replaced him on the perimeter. Throughout the night of 15 November Diduryk was the main effort, and was maintained in that posture until Tully arrived on 16 November. At that point, Moore switched the main effort back to Herren, now in the lead of the three-company assault to reach Savage. Herren remained the main effort until Tully assumed command of the LZ.

Moore clearly pressed the fight. He maintained contact with the enemy, spoiled enemy attacks, and continued to fire artillery concentrations at night to keep large NVA attack echelons at bay. His "anti-infiltration patrols" in company sectors and his "mad minute" are examples of forward momentum directed at the enemy.

Moore did not move fast, strike hard, and finish rapidly in the sense that he became involved in a defensive battle to save his lifeline, the LZ, and fought for three days against a numerically superior foe. His initial air movement to the LZ was fast and caught the NVA

off-balance, and his artillery and air strikes hit the NVA hard. But it would not be fair to propose that Moore rapidly defeated the NVA at LZ X-Ray.

For the imperative use terrain, weather, deception, and OPSEC, Moore can be assessed on three of the four categories. He used OPSEC so well that the NVA were surprised at the American intrusion into their base camp at ANTA. He employed deception through the flight route of his leaders' recon and the subsequent air assault routes into LZ X-Ray. He also used artillery fires to confuse the NVA as to which LZ his battalion would actually choose. He used smoke, conventional HE, and WP rounds to mask the movements of his units from NVA observation and fires.

Moore applied his terrain sense n LZ X-Ray. First, he chose LZ X-Ray because it was large enough to accept sixteen helicopters in one lift. Companies established defensive positions in the dry creek bed or in the low scrub, carving out hasty fighting positions. Moore used the massive anthill on the LZ for his CP. Machinegun teams found other anthills in their respective sectors as cover and concealment, as well.

Moore was adamant about conserving strength for decisive action. He reconstituted his reserve several times to build it with sufficient combat power. He kept the reserve in close proximity to his CP so that he could use it in a hurry. His notion of sweeping the LZ with

small patrols after the initial air assault lift was a conscious decision to make contact with the enemy with a small force, then attack with decisive combat power to defeat him.

Moore's fight at LZ X-Ray was a combined arms battle. His employment of combined arms and sister services, namely the artillery and U.S. Air Force, gave him the necessary edge in combat power to fight outnumbered, and win.

Lastly, Hal Moore completely understood the effects of battle on soldiers, units, and leaders. He demonstrated his comprehension of this important imperative when he and CSM Plumley walked the perimeter. His concern for the welfare and well-being of his soldiers was best seen in his methods of evacuating wounded and his near obsession with recovering the bodies of troopers killed in action. Through tough, realistic training at Ft. Benning, Moore produced a cohesive battalion which was psychologically strong enough to endure the brand of fighting they encountered at LZ X-Ray. Future battalion commanders should ask themselves, as their units roadmarch, parachute, or air assault into contact to a determined enemy, whether their soldiers, leaders, and units could perform as well as LTC Hal Moore's 1/7 Cav at LZ X-Ray.

DECISION MAKING

"...the commander," according to Clausewitz, "...finds himself in a constant whirlpool of false and true information, of mistakes committed through fear, through negligence, through haste; of disregard of his authority, either mistaken or correct motives, ...of accidents, which no mortal could have foreseen. In short, he is the victim of a hundred thousand impressions, most of which are intimidating, few of which are encouraging."¹⁸⁰

This quotation by Clausewitz essentially describes the situations confronting LTC Hal Moore during the three days of combat at LZ X-Ray. When Moore's decisions are reviewed with the Clausewitzian appreciation for the volatility of decision making in combat, his performance as a commander appears all the more remarkable. Moore's decision making prowess as a battalion commander in fierce combat stands out as one of the foremost examples of a leader making sound, timely decisions with practiced, practical judgement.

When viewed chronologically, Moore's key decisions are instructive in the manner in which they are Creative, Assertive, Improvisational, and Decisive.

To begin with, Moore had decided to try a new air assault insertion scheme for the operation into LZ X-Ray. Instead of separate, company LZ's Moore decided to approach his mission with one consolidate battalion LZ.

This was creative, original thought on Moore's part which was as ferociously audacious as it was innovative. While the source material fails to overwhelmingly substantiate just how innovative Moore was by directing a leaders' reconnaissance of the proposed LZ's, sufficient evidence exists to warrant the conclusion that his decisions pertaining to the flight route demonstrated initiative and the best use of available materials Moore then confirmed LZ X-Ray as the battalion LZ only after subordinates actively gave advice and he had included all leaders in the decision making process.

Prior to his operations order, Moore checked with COL Brown to ensure his scheme of maneuver did not conflict with the brigade commander's guidance. He then began to implement a plan, exercising the authority and responsibility delegated by his superior, COL Brown. His air movement plan, worked out in detail with his S-3, and his ground tactical plan, a variation of the standard air assault techniques, were both formulated with the understanding that calculated risks were being taken. Moore believed his surprise air assault at the base of the Chu Pongs by his entire battalion, not separate companies in multiple LZ's, was a prudent risk where the variables (METT-T) were in his favor.

Once on the LZ, Moore's series of decisions in reaction to unexpected situations during 14 November clearly highlights his tremendous ability to make sound

timely decisions at the lowest practical level. Moore was able to rapidly assimilate raw information (taken from subordinates and based on his observations) to decide upon a course of action. Moore took appropriate action (within commander's intent) in the absence of specific orders. His job was to find the enemy, fix him, and defeat him with combined arms. He was operating within COL Brown's intent when he exploited the opportunity presented by the capture of the NVA straggler by attacking toward the Chu Pong mountains. Moore frequently improvised, according to METT-T, and switched company missions, cross-attached subordinate units (platoons), or re-constituted his reserve with the piecemeal unit arrivals into the LZ. Moore constantly sought methods to improve current operations. His imaginative use of white phosphorous rounds as a smoke screen, his use of lift helicopters as impromptu air ambulances, and his creative fire support choreography are only a few of the examples of how Moore attempted to make the most imaginative and decisive use of available assets.

Moore's entire experience on LZ X-Ray is a definitive example of a leader operating autonomously, conducting a mission as an isolated force without loss of effectiveness. Moore was conducting business on the battlefield in the style of the WWII airborne battalion commanders to whom he felt an enormous professional and philosophical affinity. The parallels between Moore and

LTC Ben Vandervoort are not only educational, but they also point toward the emergency of a brand of combat leadership which seems to breed success on the battlefield: commanders who exude the "airborne philosophy" and create combat-ready, high-performing units which are aggressive and audacious; and have subordinates who are capable of vigorously executing plans or operating independently, often without orders and often surrounded or faced with a numerical disadvantage. As the U.S. Army postures itself into a light, tough, rapid deployment force whose mission is the vigorous execution of contingency operations, the standards of command of battalions in combat may very well require the "airborne philosophy" as demonstrated by Vandervoort and Moore.

PLANNING

Moore's planning for the air assault operation into LZ X-Ray is virtually a textbook example of proper mission analysis, effective troop leading procedures, and rapid adjustments to the situation. Visited by COL Brown at the Company A CP at 1700 on 13 November, Moore received his orders to conduct the air assault mission commencing at 0800 on 14 November. Still in the midst of the saturation patrolling mission, Moore had to rapidly shift gears to take full advantage of the fifteen hours he would have plan, prepare, and execute his new mission.

Although the source material does not elaborate on Moore's mission analysis or troop leading procedures, it

is still within the parameters of sound scholarship to make an assessment based on general segments of the battle narratives. The bottom line is that Moore planned effectively. It is also especially heartening to note that Moore followed the prescribed doctrine for the formulation of both his deliberate plan and his subsequent rapid battlefield planning.

At about 1800 on 13 November, Moore and his S-3 began the deliberate planning process. First in the order of business was a thorough map reconnaissance in order to identify possible landing zones. While there is no evidence to indicate how his S-2 conducted the intelligence preparation of the battlefield, it must be remembered that Moore and his brigade commander were cognizant of the NVA order of battle and were convinced of the likelihood of a meeting engagement during the operation. The much referred to "big red star on the G-2 situation map" which was drawn next to the Chu Pong mountains must be accepted as an indication that both Brown and Moore knew what the 1/7 Cav was going up against. Moore's subsequent planning and virtually all of his decisions once combat is joined are predicated on his authoritative knowledge of the enemy force ratios. Moore constantly has his "feelers out" to obtain advance warning of the arrival of the one or two NVA battalions he felt were not yet in contact.

Most important, Moore had a clear-cut idea of what success would look like in the operation. Moore anticipated, and consequently articulated to his subordinates, that the battalion had a very high probability of making contact on the LZ with a numerically superior force which it would defeat in a pitched battle along conventional lines. Success in this engagement would be achieved, according to Moore, when the momentum of the air assault was maintained; the initiative was maintained; the LZ was defended; the NVA were punished by the 1/7 Cav attack and all fire support platforms; the NVA were forced out of their Chu Pong sanctuary; and, when Moore extracted from the battlefield with every trooper who inserted into the LZ.

Moore's concept of operations was simple, flexible, and innovative. He opted for a battalion LZ as opposed to multiple company-size LZ. He modified his sweep tactics to make contact and fix the NVA with a small force while the bulk of his combat power remained near the LZ, poised to envelope the enemy. He organized his plan such that his widely scattered companies would be sequenced into LZ X-Ray in five, thirty-minute intervals. The sixteen UH-1s allocated by COL Brown could bring in nearly one entire company on each lift. While it did not exactly turn out according to plan, Moore and his S-3 went into excruciating detail in orchestrating the air movement of the battalion into LZ X-Ray.

Moore established priorities for accomplishing tasks. CPT Herren's Company B was the air assault main effort, responsible for LZ security - Moore's first priority. Follow-on lifts would accomplish Moore's second priority - sweep of the area. Fire support priority was to Company B initially, then Company A, the sweep main effort. In identifying these priorities, Moore considered his available resources. He knew he had a well-trained but understrength battalion of around 450 troopers who could go in to LZ X-Ray in 16 helicopters. He also knew that he had extremely responsive fire support on hand to give him the edge in combat power. In addition, Moore knew that the two other battalions of the brigade were in close proximity to LZ X-Ray and were a potential source of reinforcement. Finally, Moore got so detailed in his plan that he stipulated ammunition loads and how many mortars each company would deploy with. While this may smack of micromanagement on Moore's part, it turned out that these logistics concerns were well justified. Moore lightened the load of each individual soldier to the minimum essential items: ammunition, water, and food, with ammunition being the number one priority. Rifleman would make the attack with 300 rounds of 5.56mm ammo; machinegunners would take 800 rounds of 7.62 ammo; each soldier in the battalion carried two fragmentation grenades and one smoke grenade. Moore had planned for

ammunition resupply, but the initial fighting load was a factor in saving the LZ.

Finally, there is no question that Moore's planning enabled him to Adjust According to the Situation. His lightning-like assessments of the battlefield enabled him to make appropriate adjustments in fluid situation. He changed company missions many times, developed impromptu task organizations for immediate missions, and he responded to subordinates' requests for adjustments based on their knowledge of the situation. Moore could not have affected this flexible adaptation scheme without first Establishing a Sense of Common Purpose for the Unit. The common purpose of 1/7 Cav on the morning of 14 November was to find the NVA and kill a lot of them. By twilight on 16 November no one would dispute the battalion's claim of "mission accomplished."

USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS

In parallel with the two previous assessments, the LPI and SKA of Use of Available Systems are not appropriate for analysis of Moore's combat leadership at LZ X-Ray. While there may have been information filtering and there certainly was resource management, these performance indicators do not have the combat-orientation necessary for application in the study.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Hal Moore's performance at LZ X-Ray ranks as one of the best examples of the application of professional Army

ethics in a combat situation. Moore's actions on the LZ clearly demonstrate how professional Army ethics are the foundation of moral and physical courage on the battlefield.

Hal Moore fully Accepted Responsibility for the conduct of the battle of LZ X-Ray. He was entirely responsible for his decisions and for whatever his unit accomplished or failed to accomplish. In allowing subordinates to make decisions at their level, in their perspective, Moore acknowledged the ownership of the failures and successes of his subordinates. He acknowledged that Herren was initially going to be unable to reach Herrick's isolated platoon. He acknowledged that the combined attack by Nadal and Herren would not link-up with Savage. He accepted the possibility that Savage might be annihilated. He accepted the possibility that his entire battalion might be overrun due to the numerical advantage of the NVA - but he never articulated that concern to subordinates.

Moore was definitely a Role Model. He led by example in every way, and his subordinates mimicked his behavior. Moore's excitement at the discovery of the NVA deserter also exhilarated his company commanders and reinforced their aggressiveness toward the enemy. Moore's attitude for the air assault was to attack the NVA; his company commanders and platoon leaders showed that they were imbued with the same spirit. Moore "kept his cool"

and made quick decisions "on his feet". Likewise, Herren, Nadal, Edwards, and Diduryk maintained their composure during the roughest moments, personally engaged the enemy, and commanded their units, often in spite of wounds. It must be remembered that Diduryk and Sugdinis were two company commanders from another battalion. To Moore's credit, these officers seemed to quickly accept his dynamic combat leadership and they mimicked his behavior throughout their period of attachment to 1/7 Cav.

Moore was not afraid to admit a mistake or failure but it is important to note that he treated failure as a condition of the battlefield and planned around it. Herein lies the enormous difference between successful and unsuccessful leaders on the battlefield. Beginning with the recognition that things will never go according to plan after the first round is fired, the successful combat commander accepts the events of the battlefield as distinct decision points which require expeditious assessment, validation, and reaction. The successful commander pre-determines those elements of the battle which will be valid criteria for judging whether or not he is winning or losing the engagement. By contrast, the unsuccessful commander neglects to establish criteria for success. He then compounds his error by subjecting himself to a decision-making process which is bombarded by thousands of impressions of the battle. This only serves to add additional layers of obscuration to the already

heavy "fog of war". The successful commander knows what indicators, or signs, to look for. His professional Army ethics enable him to stand firm in the midst of the swirling maelstrom of battle and make informed, intuitive decisions once he assesses the status of his indicators of success. In the case of LTC Hal Moore at LZ X-Ray, it is evident that he accepted a mistake or failure at face value, as a local condition, not an end state. By applying practiced, practical judgement, Moore Demonstrated Maturity in command under fire. His decisions were not emotional yet they accounted for the "can do" attitude of his organization and capitalized on the emotional charge of his unit. Undeniably, the actions of subordinate leaders like Edwards, Marm, and Savage boldly show to what extent Moore's professional ethics permeated his battalion.

Moore Demonstrated Bearing and Physical Fitness. His posture, appearance, and physical movement around the perimeter during the three days of fighting are indicative of his ability to endure stress without rest. It also highlighted his confidence in himself and his unit. Moore and his men shared the view that they had, and could, inflict serious punishment on the NVA.

Moore's concern for the evacuation of the wounded and dead troopers of his battalion is a premier indicator of his compassion, selflessness, and integrity. Moore demanded that all casualties be evacuated as rapidly as

possible and that every soldier be accounted for at the end of the fighting. In light of the relatively embryonic nature of the airmobility concept, his use of troop helicopters to evacuate casualties on their exit flights from the LZ was a highly imaginative approach which had great impact on the individual and collective morale of his battalion. His troopers knew that, if they were wounded, they would be evacuated by helicopter for immediate treatment. They also knew, and were possibly comforted by the idea, that if they were killed, their bodies would not remain "lost" on the battlefield, that they would go "home". In the training environments of the peacetime Army, these notions fail to receive sufficient attention. Based on a review of NTC and JRTC "lessons learned", casualty evacuation procedures for light infantry units, in contact with the enemy, deserve increased interest. As Moore so ably demonstrated, concern for the well-being of the soldiers includes expeditious casualty evacuation and guaranteed recovery of remains. CTC results routinely reveal that for most battalions, this concern never progresses past an ambiguous, templated remark in the Personnel Annex of the operations order. Future battalion commanders must address casualty evacuation as a small unit combat imperative if they expect their soldiers to believe that leaders will take care of them if they are injured while fighting aggressively with the enemy. As Hal Moore has

shown, soldiers must know that their remains will be tenderly and honorably recovered by the unit. For future battalion commanders, this is ethical behavior of the highest order.

ENDNOTES

- 1 J. D. Coleman, Pleiku, p. 37.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 LTG Tolson, Airmobility 1961-1971, p. 72.
- 4 Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft, ed., American's First Battles, 1776-1965, pp. 304-308.
- 5 Heller and Stofft, p. 309.
- 6 Coleman, p. 77.
- 7 Ibid. and Coleman, p. 95.
- 8 LTC David R. Campbell, "Fighting Encircled: A Study in U.S. Army Leadership," p. 68.
- 9 Shelby Stanton, Anatomy of a Division.
- 10 Michael Herr, Dispatches, pp. 95-97.
- 11 Ibid., p. 96.
- 12 John Galvin, Air Assault, p. 293.
- 13 Galvin, pp. 293-294 and Coleman, p. 189.
- 14 Campbell, p. 69.
- 15 John Cash, et.al., Seven Firefights in Vietnam, p. 2.
- 16 Stanton, p. 55.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Cash, p. 2.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Galvin, p. 294.
- 21 Heller and Stofft, p. 315.
- 22 Cash, p. 3.
- 23 Stanton, p. 55.

24 Coleman, pp. 197-198, estimates a battalion size attack by the H-15 Main Force VC Battalion. U.S. casualties were seven killed, twenty-three wounded. Cash doesn't mention the attack.

25 Coleman, p. 199.

26 Coleman, p. 199 and Cash, p. 4.

27 Coleman, p. 200 and Cash, p. 5.

28 Campbell, p. 69.

29 Campbell, p. 69; Coleman, p. 200; and Cash, p. 5.

30 Cash, p. 5.

31 Coleman, p. 200.

32 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), Combat Operations After Action Report-Pleiku Campaign, enclosure 28.

33 Cash, p. 6.

34 Campbell, p. 70.

35 1st Cav Div (Airmobile), p. 84.

36 Ibid., p. 85 and Galvin, p. 294.

37 Ibid., p. 8 and Coleman, pp. 203-204.

38 Cash, p. 8.

39 Campbell, p. 70.

40 Ibid.; Cash, pp. 8-10; and Coleman, p. 207.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Campbell, p. 71. From LTG (RET) Harold G. Moore's tape to BG William Kinnard (Chief, Center for Military History), 30 April 1984, Encircled Project Files, CMH, p. 3.

44 Ibid.

45 Cash, p. 11.

⁴⁶ Campbell, p. 72; Cash, p. 11; and Coleman, p. 209.

⁴⁷ Coleman, p. 209.

⁴⁸ Campbell, p. 72; Cash, p. 11; and Coleman, p. 209.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Coleman, p. 209.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Campbell, p. 73.

⁵³ Galvin, p. 294.

⁵⁴ Cash, p. 12.

⁵⁵ Coleman, p. 209.

⁵⁶ Cash, p. 13, describes the POW as a deserter who had lived on bananas for five days.

⁵⁷ Campbell, p. 71.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid. All three sources indicate that Moore gave Herren instructions to intensify his search and to be prepared to assume Company C's mission. However, all three sources then indicate that Herren had assumed the Company C mission concurrent with the orders to be prepared to do so. It seems unlikely that Moore would push Company B toward the mountains without first ensuring the LZ was secure. Security of the LZ, in the face of an enormous enemy threat, was paramount. While there is no evidence to corroborate the assumption that Moore subsequently ordered Herren to change missions after Company A landed, it is highly logical that Moore would have done it just about like that.

⁶¹ Cash, p. 13.

⁶² Galvin, p. 294.

⁶³ Coleman, p. 211.

⁶⁴ Cash, p. 14.

⁶⁵ Coleman, p. 213.

- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Stanton, p. 56.
- 68 Coleman, pp. 213-214.
- 69 Ibid., p. 214.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Campbell, p. 74.
- 72 Cash, p. 18.
- 73 Ibid., pp. 18-19 and Coleman, pp. 215-216.
- 74 Campbell, p. 75 and Coleman, p. 217 and First Cav Division AAR, p. 84.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Cash, p. 21.
- 77 Ibid. and Coleman, p. 218.
- 78 Ibid.; Cash, p. 21; and Campbell, p. 75.
- 79 Campbell, p. 76.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 Stanton, p. 58.
- 82 Campbell, p. 76. The battalion surgeon, CPT Metzger, loaded wounded all afternoon even though he had been wounded in the shoulder. Late in the afternoon, Metzger was killed by a sniper.
- 83 Campbell, p. 76.
- 84 Stanton, p. 59 and 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 84.
- 85 Coleman, p. 219.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid., p. 220.
- 88 Coleman, p. 220; Cash, p. 25; and Campbell, p. 77.
- 89 Ibid., p. 220.

- 90 Ibid., p. 221.
- 91 Campbell, p. 77.
- 92 Ibid., p. 28. It was for his heroic action in this attack that 2LT Marm would be awarded the Medal of Honor.
- 93 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 84.
- 94 Coleman, pp. 233-224; Cash, p. 29; and Campbell, p. 78.
- 95 Stanton, pp. 59-60.
- 96 Cash, pp. 29-31.
- 97 Coleman, p. 225.
- 98 Campbell, p. 78.
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 Tolson, Airmobility 1961-1971, pp. 78-79.
- 101 Campbell, p. 79.
- 102 Ibid.; Coleman, p. 226; and Cash, p. 32.
- 103 Coleman, p. 230.
- 104 Ibid., pp. 230-231.
- 105 Ibid. and 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 84.
- 106 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 84.
- 107 Campbell, p. 79. Artillery at LZ Falcon fired over 4000 rounds that night.
- 108 Ibid.; Coleman, p. 230; and Cash, p. 36.
- 109 Ibid.
- 110 Ibid.
- 111 Stanton, p. 60.
- 112 Cash, p. 38.
- 113 Heller and Stofft, p. 318.
- 114 Stanton, p. 60.

- 115 Campbell, p. 80.
- 116 Cash, p. 38.
- 117 Coleman, p. 235 and Cash, p. 39.
- 118 Campbell, p. 80.
- 119 Cash, p. 40.
- 120 Coleman, p. 236.
- 121 Ibid.
- 122 Stanton, p. 61.
- 123 Coleman, p. 237; Cash, p. 41; Campbell, pp. 80-81; and 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 87.
- 124 Ibid.
- 125 Coleman, p. 238; Cash, p. 42; Campbell, pp. 81-82; and 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 87.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 Cash, pp. 44-45; Coleman, pp. 240-241; and Campbell, p. 82.
- 128 Cash, p. 46; Coleman, pp. 241-242; Campbell, p. 90; and 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 90.
- 129 Ibid.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Cash, p. 47; Coleman, pp. 242-243; Campbell, pp. 82-83; and 1st Cav Division AAR, pp. 90-91.
- 132 1st Cav Division AAR, p. 91.
- 133 Ibid.
- 134 Ibid.
- 135 Coleman, p. 244.
- 136 Ibid. and 1st Cav Div AAR, p. 91.
- 137 Coleman., p. 245.
- 138 Ibid. p. 202.

139 Ibid., p. 10.

140 Hamburger, "Leadership in Combat: An
Historical Appraisal," p. 3.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The primary objective of this thesis has been to determine what skills of command of battalions in combat could be learned from a leadership analysis of selected light infantry combat battalion commanders in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. The study focused on an historical analysis and leadership assessment of the successful combat performance of three Distinguished Service Cross-winning battalion commanders. What conclusions can be drawn about battalion command in combat? Do the leadership competencies of FM 22-100, Military Leadership, provide a framework for historical assessment of battalion commanders in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam? Can the nine leadership competencies and their associated tasks, SKA, and LPI serve as an assessment or evaluation tool for battalion commanders during training or NTC or JRTC rotations? Are there overtly measurable criteria for success in commanding a battalion in combat? Does an historical analysis of past battalion commanders reveal basic tenets of battlefield success?

Fundamental to any discussion of conclusions of this study is the clear understanding of the intent of the leadership competencies and the supporting tasks, the

skills, knowledge, and attitudes, and the leadership performance indicators. The nine leadership competencies - communications, supervision, teaching and counseling, soldier team development, technical and tactical proficiency, decision-making, planning, use of available systems, and professional ethics - were developed in 1976 to provide a framework for leadership development and assessment. However, the lack of adequate tasks, conditions, standards (or valid performance indicators) for evaluating, assessing, and developing leaders during training events (such as ARTEPs and NTC rotations) drove the Army Research Institute and the Center for Army Leadership to develop the leadership performance indicators (LPI). The LPI were based on the nine leadership competencies and were intended to be subjective, not totally measurable (in order to allow for a leader's personal dynamics), and were to be generic in nature in order to be applicable in the "schoolhouse" and on the AirLand Battlefield. The end product, as seen in the May, 1989, approved final draft of FM 22-100, Military Leadership, is an Army leadership doctrine which outlines the nine functions in which leaders must be competent if their organizations are to operate effectively.

The first conclusion which is evident from this study is that the FM 22-100 leadership competencies are an adequate outline for conducting an historical assessment of past battalion commanders in combat. In general terms,

the assessments of the combat leadership of LTCs Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore have confirmed the Army's doctrinal position that successful combat battalion commanders must "perform" some degree of each of the nine over-arching competencies if their respective organizations are to operate effectively under fire. Because the competencies are deeply rooted in the eleven time-honored leadership principles - the leadership doctrine of the 1940's, 50's, and 60's - a fundamentally consistent evaluation was attainable. In this regard, the FM 22-100 leadership competencies clearly fulfilled their doctrinal role as broad, over-arching performance categories. Moreover, the study has also clearly indicated that, at least in terms of historical assessment, some competencies are difficult to observe or are not completely applicable to a combat situation (see diagram 5). This conclusion is based on the fact that many of the required leadership tasks, supporting skills, knowledge, and attitudes (SKA), and leadership performance indicators (LPI) - the subordinate evaluation criteria of each competency - did not have a warfighting focus and were more germane to "the schoolhouse" than to the AirLand Battlefield.

This conclusion substantiates the existence of a disconnect between Army leadership doctrine and actual field application. Viewed in the context of the FM 100-5 operational doctrine, the "breakdown" has occurred at the

point where the nine competencies may be effectively used as a leadership assessment tool during training events (CPS, FTX, ARTEP, NTC or JRTC rotation, etc.). At this point in their development, the leadership competencies are not entirely valid for use in the field. The application of the leadership competency/performance indicator model in the examination of the combat leadership of Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore highlighted both major and minor incongruities. For example, "Technical and Tactical Proficiency" is the competency which is the keystone to the entire leadership arch, yet there are no tasks, conditions, or standards for assessing this tremendously crucial function during training events. This is a major shortfall. Another example is found in the competency "Use of Available Systems." The "systems" which immediately come to mind are the "Battlefield Operating Systems" (BOS) of AirLand Battle Doctrine. However, the essential task of this competency is "Effectively Employ Management Technology," and the supporting SKA and LPI deal with information filtering, computer literacy, and the use of technology to garner and process information. There is no mention of BOS. Clearly, some fine-tuning is needed to reconstitute the linkage between the leadership competencies of FM 22-100 and FM 100-5.

A more detailed conclusive analysis of the performance standards of each competency follows.

4-Demonstrated to a Superior Degree
 3-Demonstrated to a Moderate Degree
 2-Demonstrated to a Low Degree
 1-Demonstration Implied, but not Observed
 0-SKA Does Not Apply in this Situation

LEGEND:

COMMANDER	LTC VANDERVOORT	LTC LYNCH	LTC MOORE
COMPETENCY			
COMMUNICATIONS	4	3	4
SUPERVISION	4	4	4
TEACHING AND COUNSELING	1	1	1
SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT	1	4	4
TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL PROFICIENCY	4	4	4
DECISION MAKING	4	4	4
PLANNING	1	4	4
USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS	0	0	0
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS	4	4	4
OTHER	1	1	1

COMMUNICATIONS

The assessments of the three battalion commanders has clearly shown that without effective communications on the battlefield, the commander runs the risk of losing control of his organization and jeopardizing the success of his mission and that of his parent organization. Included in this is the fact that poor or ineffective communications gets soldiers killed. LTCs Vandervoort and Moore stand out as extremely effective communicators because of their personal emphasis and involvement in combat communications. Both of these officers demonstrated to a great degree several of the SKA subordinate to the communications competency: (1) Stress Simplicity; (2) Clearly Communicate Orders; (3) Communicate Up, Down, Horizontally; and (4) Clearly Communicate Intent. The degree to which Vandervoort and Moore demonstrated these SKA suggests that these four supporting skills may very well be considered as the imperatives of battalion commander communications in combat.

In contrast, LTC Lynch seems to have succeeded in spite of a less-than-stellar rating in the communications category. The research clearly showed that Lynch had incomplete communications with his immediate superior, COL Nist. Also, Lynch appears to have had minimal communications with adjacent units and had trouble maintaining solid comms with his supporting arms. While

there are numerous mitigating circumstances pertaining to Lynch's marginally effective communications on Hill 314, two points are especially instructive: (1) Lynch had his best communications with his assault companies. By stressing simplicity, clearly communicating orders, and by clearly communicating intent to his subordinate commanders, Lynch placed his emphasis on the aspect of communications which deserved the most attention - his battalion internal communications; and (2) the synchronization of combat power at the decisive point of the battlefield revolves around communications with supporting arms and services. As a result, the battalion commander must make the synchronization of fires his own pre-battle special interest item if he expects it to work according to plan. Additionally, a back-up communications plan - internal to the battalion as well as with combined arms elements - is vital to effective communications.

In what may appear to be an aberration, none of the three battalion commanders gave any overt indications that they were a Good Listener or Obtained Feedback. From an historical perspective, Be a Good Listener is a SKA that is difficult to assess. And unless it is specifically described in the combat narrative, Obtain Feedback is just as difficult to analyze. This conclusion seems to suggest that unless more specific LPI are developed for these SKA, it will be just as difficult to assess these SKA during training exercises.

But what is most important about these two SKA is that they are both vital and complementary ingredients of effective communications on the battlefield. How well a battalion commander can Be a Good Listener and Obtain Feedback is best measured in the types of decisions he makes in situations where subordinates have suggested probable courses of action or offered specific tactics or techniques.

Using this criteria, there is ample evidence within the combat situations of each of the three battalion commanders to demonstrate the "listener-decision maker" linkage. Vandervoort, for example, is described as having "listened" to LT Turnball's assessment of the situation at Neuville-au-Plain and subsequently "deciding" to not only maintain the outpost in the village but allow Turnball to execute the mission. Later, when LT Wray approached him with a request for reinforcements, Vandervoort "listened", then "decided" that Wray should instead conduct a counterattack (which produced handsome results).

LTC Lynch employed a similar philosophy on Hill 314. He "listened" to the situation assessments from his assault company commanders during numerous incremental stages of the attack. He then "decided" to continue the attack, leaving execution details to the company commanders on the ground. The same is true of LTC Moore at LZ X-Ray. There are numerous examples of Moore "listening" to his company commanders' assessments or

suggestions and reacting with "decisions" that took into full account the trust and confidence Moore felt in his subordinates' abilities to execute his orders.

The assessments infer that fundamental to the "listener-decision-maker" linkage is the assertion that the battalion commander must have an organization based on a deliberately constructed and maintained sense of trust and confidence in the ability of his subordinate leaders. The connection with SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT, TEACHING AND COUNSELING, AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS is not accidental. COMMUNICATIONS is the cornerstone of the arch of competencies; every competency is based on COMMUNICATIONS or affected by it. The successful battalion commanders, then, are the ones that "listen to their battalions and obtain feedback on key activities. The whole chain of command then becomes a group of "listeners" and "feedback-gatherers." By the simple act of listening to his soldiers or quizzing his men about the mission, the battalion commander can establish the groundwork for a cohesive, technically and tactically proficient, and high-performance soldier team. This is the type of unit required for contingency operations in the 1990's.

The final comment on the communications competency deals with the SKA Clearly Communicate Intent. As the narratives of the three battalion commanders have unmistakably articulated, combat at the battalion level is incredibly chaotic and fluid. Vandervoort, Lynch, and

Moore demonstrated that decentralized command, reinforced by the presence of the battalion commander at decisive locations during the action, is the key to success in battalion combat. Because the battalion commander cannot be everywhere on the battlefield, he must rely on subordinate leaders to use practical, practiced judgement to solve problems at small arms range. The battalion commander facilitates the execution of this decision-making by articulating his overall intent to subordinates in mission orders.

Statements of intent establish two extremely vital guidelines for subordinate leaders: (1) the commander stipulates the parameters, or boundaries, within which the subordinate has flexibility to operate; and (2) the commander focuses the subordinate on the eventual end state of the mission by describing - in very simple terms - what success will look like at the conclusion of the mission. The importance of commander's intent cannot be over-stated. The three battalion commanders in this study clearly demonstrated that intent must be communicated to subordinates if rapid reaction to unforeseen circumstances is expected. Quick response to new developments is just what battalion-level combat is all about.

But the communication of intent cannot be clearly achieved in three-paragraph statements. Intent must be succinctly and concisely addressed in extremely simple, common sense terms. If it is not, a simple back-brief by

subordinates will reveal the confusion. Statements of commander's intent must describe what success will look like on the battlefield. Vandervoort "painted" the picture of success for Turnball at Neuville and the lieutenant executed a mission which was to have operational-level significance. Lynch focused his company commanders on the end-state of fighting on Hill 314 by stating that the capture of Knob 3 would constitute success. Moore's basic intent for the mission into LZ X-Ray was to find the elusive NVA units and defeat them in a conventional battle. In every case, a straight-forward picture of success was included in the commander's intent.

SUPERVISION

LTG (RET) Arthur S. Collins, Jr. writes in his article, "Tactical Command" that "there is no substitute for the physical presence (of the commander) on the ground."¹ This philosophy is the skill of Command Forward - a performance standard clearly demonstrated by Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore. "Battalion command is the essence of tactical command," writes LTG Collins, and it is at battalion level that the commander "actively exercises his command responsibility in a most constant, obvious, personal, and effective manner."² The successful battalion commander is:

Out where the action is...with one of the lead units, or at a forward observation post where he can see the ground being fought over, or at a critical crossroad or stream crossing, or at the forward collecting point talking to men who have just been wounded in battle. In the course of a day, he will

have been at several such points. All the time he is weaving a web of knowledge of the terrain, the effectiveness of his unit's firepower, and that of the enemy. He is aware of the hardships and pressures his troops are being subjected to and how they are reacting in a given situation. He is consistently sensitive to his unit, his troops, and the conditions under which his unit is fighting. The same applies in peacetime training and operations.³

As seen in the examples of Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore, Command Forward appears to be an imperative of command and control of an infantry battalion in combat. LTG Collins' description of commanding forward is excellent and clearly shows the importance of supervision and its relationship with other competencies. Appropriately, Command Forward is the first SKA of the SUPERVISION competency.

The analysis of the three battalion commanders has revealed that the SKA Enforce Safety Standards has a peacetime slant and does not take into account the more applicable combat safety requirements. There is no disputing the importance of safety in training or in combat. Where the LPI for Enforce Safety Standards falls apart is that there is no mention of the inherently

dangerous business of direct and indirect fires on the battlefield. In other words, a more relevant LPI would list indicators such as "apply fire control measures", "effectively command and control direct and indirect fires", "protect troops from fratricide and enemy fires", etc.

The remaining three SKA's of the supervise competency were found to be difficult to apply to combat leadership assessments. Establish/Enforce Standards, Follow-Up on Corrective Action, and Provide Feedback have LPI which relate more to garrison activities or structured training events than to dynamic combat situations. To effectively supervise subordinates - the key task of the competency - in garrison or on some training exercises where there is ample time for after-action review and feedback, these LPI will work well. However, the LPI need to address such combat critical tasks as "assess morale of the organization", "assess combat power", or "assess the ability of the organization to perform continuous operations".

The LPI need to examine such considerations as faced by LTC Lynch before he assaulted Hill 314: how to enforce standards and follow up on corrective action after a failed mission? What type of training should occur between battles to correct identified deficiencies from the previous combat experience? Or look at Moore's reaction to the failed attempts to reach Savage: what

sort of corrective action and standards enforcement must occur during the course of a battle which must take into account the unforgiving nature of failure in combat - friendly casualties?

TEACHING AND COUNSELING

As each of the three assessments has shown, it is difficult to ascertain what degree of coaching and teaching went on in the combat situations of the battalion commanders. This is an extremely important competency which actually has its full impact prior to and after combat, not during battle.

There is no doubt that a battalion commander in combat must demand action, but the LPI defining this SKA is incomplete. While subordinate initiative is mentioned, there is no requirement listed for "operate within commander's intent" or "subordinate leaders use imagination and initiative to overcome obstacles". Both of these indicators were prevalent actions of the subordinates of Vandervoort, Lynch and Moore.

The SKA Teach Skills and Train for War were found to be present but not observed in all three assessments. Undeniably, these two SKA are the fundamentals of infantry tactical commandership and have the most significant impact on the actions of the unit in combat. Unfortunately, the LPI which support these SKA seem to skirt the importance of such indicators as "subordinates demonstrate knowledge of current tactical doctrine and

weapons employment" or "subordinates demonstrate complete understanding of combat leadership requirements." Nor is there mention of "mastery of combined arms warfighting" - vital to infantry success and demonstrated in each of the three combat narratives. Logically, these SKA should also address the application of the nine leadership competencies to pre-combat and combat situations.

SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT

It is a fair assumption to say that each of the three battalion commanders achieved overwhelming success because they had developed cohesive soldier teams prior to entering combat. The SKA for this competency are appropriate and well-developed.

Each of the three battalion commanders in the study went into their respective engagements with somewhat different levels of soldier team development. Vandervoort, for example, was making his third combat jump, but it was his first operation as battalion commander. His troops were all seasoned veterans of fighting at Sicily and Salerno, with successful missions under their belts.

LTC Lynch, on the other hand, had his work cut out for him. His battalion was hastily moved into combat without adequate collective task training. On his first mission, his battalion performed dismally. Thus, after enduring a poor first outing, Lynch had to develop his soldier teams from the point of a morale disadvantage.

The manner in which Lynch seems to have turned his battalion around reads like a listing of each and every SKA and LPI of the soldier team competency.

Moore had a seasoned "training" battalion when he air assaulted into LZ X-Ray. He had almost all of the subordinate leaders at LZ X-Ray that had trained with him for 14 months at Ft. Benning. Other than dulsatory patrol action near Pleiku, Moore's battalion was yet to be tested in heavy combat. As the narrative points out, Moore's battalion was a well-developed soldier team because he placed tremendous emphasis on it during the Ft. Benning days.

The litmus test of a soldier team occurs when a unit is inserted into the swirling, turbulent hurricane of close combat; it absolutely must train for this "test" in peacetime or, like Lynch's 3/7 Cav, be shipwrecked by the storm. Current U.S. Army contingency operations reinforces this concept. Future battalion commanders must have cohesive combat teams before deployment; few opportunities for soldier team development exist at hand grenade range.

Perhaps the most vexing issue of soldier team development is training subordinates to replace you. While the Army of the late 1980's seemed to get beyond the "zero defects mentality", the budgetary constraints of the 90's will invariably force units to make the best showing on each high visibility, high-dollar training event. NTC

and JRTC are premier examples where the use of subordinate leaders to replace commanders takes on a risk that is out of immediate proportion to the long-term training benefits. Simply stated, units are afraid to "lose", and when organizations get only one opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency during a battalion commander's three year tour, the stakes are incredibly high. Many factors contribute to this attitude and it is not the intended purpose of this thesis to lay them out.

But, the bottom line is that combat requires leaders at every level to be trained to replace his superior. Superiors have to take active measures to ensure that subordinates can step in to run the organization. Though none of the three battalion commanders in this study had to relinquish command to a subordinate leader, the examples at Hill 314 and LZ X-Ray point out the necessity for NCOs to be prepared to command platoons and companies is blatantly evident. What the U.S. Army needs to emphasize is a specific training program for this requirement. This is the highest form of subordinate leader development - the one that will pay the greatest dividends in combat.

TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL PROFICIENCY

Because there were no tasks, SKA, or LPI for this competency, a performance standard was developed for use in the leadership/competency performance indicator model.

As described in Chapter 3, the SKA and LPI constructed for the study were intended to demonstrate linkage between the Army's leadership doctrine and the warfighting theory of AirLand Battle doctrine. Although it is arguable whether it is fair to assess the three commanders on doctrine which did not exist in their time, it is instructive to observe just how applicable AirLand Battle doctrine is in terms of learning the skills of command of battalions in combat.

What comes out of the application of AirLand Battle doctrine in the assessment of TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL PROFICIENCY is not surprising: success on the battlefield is dependent upon the integration of maneuver, firepower, protection, and leadership. The salient point is that battalion commanders win on the battlefield because they plan for and orchestrate all available combat systems. This orchestration is seen in AirLand Battle doctrine as synchronization of Battlefield Operating Systems.

DECISION-MAKING

Unequivocally, each of the three battalion commanders demonstrated exceptional skill in making tough decisions under fire. Several factors stand out as contributing to the effectiveness of decision-making in combat: (1) a simple plan facilitates rapid decisions as events unfold; (2) tough decisions are best communicated face-to-face with subordinate leaders; (3) the commander and his subordinate leaders must subscribe to and apply

the same decision-making methods (in training and in combat); and (4) that the "practiced, practical judgement", "terrain sense", "single-minded tenacity", "ferocious audacity", and "physical confidence" highlighted in LTC K. E. Hamburger's study of combat leadership are appropriate SKA for this competency.

Of the four factors contributing to decision-making in combat, the five traits of successful combat leaders listed in LTC Hamburger's study deserves some attention. These traits were applied in the assessments of Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore as auxilliary LPI. Interestingly enough, all three battalion commanders exercised these components in decision-making on the battlefield. And of these five components, "terrain sense" and "practiced practical judgement" - common sense - stood out above the others.

PLANNING

The analysis of the three battalion commanders suggests that the simplest plans are the ones that work best in combat. Simple plans facilitate flexibility, thus providing the battalion commadner with some space (and maybe time) to adapt to fluid situations. There is nothing new in this conclusion (see Infantry in Battle, p. 35) but it bears repeating in this age of complex, multi-layered contingency operations.

Several points of interest have come out of the application of this competency in the battalion commander

assessments: (1) the battalion commander must have a supervision plan mapped out for the battle. It is vital that he deliberately chart his movement around the battlefield so that he can get the first-hand impressions of the fighting which are essential to combat decision-making and planning; (2) success must be defined for subordinate units. To reiterate, the commander must style his intent in such a way as to plainly articulate the end-state of the mission; (3) troop leading procedures worked in three wars, and they will work now. Troop leading procedures and infantry tactical doctrine were the foundation of the performance of Lynch on Hill 314. And Moore went "by the book" as he planned for the air assault into LZ X-Ray. Troops leading procedures must be applied completely up and down the chain of command; from battalion to squad. Units must rehearse, conduct back-briefs, have "chalk-talks" like football teams, use sandtables (models, etc.) - but these vital segments of mission planning are not described in the LPI for planning

USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS

The task, SKA, and LPI of this competency constitute the largest disconnect between AirLand Battle doctrine and Army leadership doctrine. First, the task effectively employ management technology, has too much of an automatic data processing ring to it. FM 22-100 reinforces this slant by neglecting to include such battlefield-related tasks as "effectively employ

battlefield operating systems", "effectively integrate sustainment imperatives", or "effectively employ command and control systems". This competency must be over-hauled to bring it on line with AirLand Battle doctrine. In its current configuration, it was universally not applicable as an historical assessment tool.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The professional ethics competency, and its supporting SKA and LPI, is the best developed competency of FM 22-100. The application of this competency in the assessments boldly highlighted the monumental importance of professional ethics on the battlefield. Each of the three battalion commanders examined in this study exemplified the professional Army ethic in such a way as to make leader ethical behavior into something of a combat multiplier. Vandervoort continued on in combat with a broken ankle and clearly signalled to his soldiers what the leadership standard was as his battalion fought at St. Mere-Eglise. Lynch demonstrated exceptional maturity during the fight for Hill 314 at a time when his battalion badly needed a strong, self-disciplined leader to emulate. And Moore demonstrated the highest standard of the professional army ethic by ensuring that every trooper of his battalion was accounted for at the end of the battle.

This study has shown that the leadership competencies of FM 22-100 provide an adequate framework

for historical assessment of successful battalion commanders, yet need some fine-tuning to achieve a FM 100-5 warfighting focus. But has the study identified any overtly measurable criteria for successful battalion command in combat?

The answer is yes. The examination of Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore has shown that the following eleven performance indicators must appear to produce success:

- (1) rapid battlefield planning (and simple plans)
- (2) missions orders
- (3) maintain initiative
- (4) fire support (coordination, synchronization)
- (5) innovation
- (6) coaching on the battlefield
- (7) communications
- (8) training; pre-battle, between battles
- (9) casualty evacuation and KIA recovery
- (10) location/presence of battalion commander
forward
- (11) define success for subordinates

The following is a brief discussion of each of those eleven performance indicators.

Rapid Battlefield Planning

Although rapid planning almost sounds like a contradiction in terms, on the battlefield it is the "bread and butter" of the battalion commander engaged with the enemy. What Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore have

demonstrated is that at the battalion level, the decision cycle must be quickly completed if friendly forces are to retain the initiative and momentum of offensive operations. The outcome of the battle, it seems, depends on the ability of the battalion commander to complete the cycle of acquiring information (through first hand observations), analyzing information and developing responses (orienting on the immediate tactical problem), making a decision, and issuing instructions and supervising task execution. It also necessarily calls for a command and control philosophy which incorporates commander presence at forward locations, use of mission orders, clear articulation of success, and synchronization of combat power.

The most important aspect of rapid battlefield planning seems to be the battalion commander's ability to "read", or assess, the situation confronting his battalion. This assessment "snapshot" may take into account the full spectrum of the situation from the operational to the squad or individual soldier level. Vandervoort's "read" of the situation after the parachute drop in the early hours of 6 June 1944 stands out as a classic case of a battalion commander recognizing the opportunity for his organization to positively affect the outcome of the operational battle. The recognition of this opportunity was predicated on the window of opportunity afforded by the German actions (and

inaction). The "key" to this "read" - to use some football terminology - is the enemy, and the battalion commander has got to be in a forward position in order to accurately assess the enemy activities.

Hand-in-hand with rapid battlefield planning goes the skill of terrain appreciation, or "reading" the terrain. "The best tactical commanders," according to LTG Collins, "have a keen appreciation of terrain...such a commander's unit experiences one tactical success after another."⁴ Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore all showed an "eye for the terrain." Vandervoort sited Turnball at Neuville because he was conscious of the observation and fields of fire afforded by the wide, flat ground leading north to Montbourg. Lynch ascertained the tactical significance of each of the Knobs on Hill 314 and battled for control of them. And Moore immediately saw the advantages and disadvantages of the terrain of LZ X-Ray and he shaped his tactics appropriately.

"There is no doubt in my mind," continues LTG Collins, "that a commander's ability to see the advantages and disadvantages in terrain for attack or defense is a major contributing factor to his unit's success."⁵ The absolutely imperative nature of this skill of command in combat is also reiterated in Infantry in Battle in clear, performance oriented prose:

In the absence of definite information small infantry units must be guided by their mission and by the terrain... The intelligent leader knows that the terrain is his staunchest ally, and that it virtually

determines his formation and scheme of maneuver. Therefore, he constantly studies it for indicated lines of action... The ground is an open book. The commander who reads and heeds what it has to say is laying a sound foundation for tactical success.⁶

Mission Orders

This study has clearly highlighted that the battalion commander in combat must, as a rule, employ mission orders to achieve success. Vandervoort's success at St. Mere-Eglise is directly attributed to his use of mission orders with LT's Turnball and Wray. Lynch, in a somewhat different predicament in terms of the battlefield maturity of his organization, used mission orders to demonstrate his trust and confidence in his subordinates to get the job done. Moore's use of mission orders to CPT's Nadal and Herren is an example of practiced, practical judgement on the battlefield. Moore was fighting three separate engagements on LZ X-Ray and he had to rely on his subordinates to fight their own battles within his overall intent.

The use of mission orders in combat is one of the fundamentals of AirLand Battle doctrine. This study has not only shown historical precedent for mission orders as a standard for success, but it has also suggested that the nine leadership competencies prescribe the use of mission orders in combat. Future contingency operations involving the U.S. Army will require that success on the battlefield be achieved by aggressive, intelligent, speedy, and decisive action. The exercise of initiative by

subordinates on the modern battlefield can only be facilitated by decentralized decision-making and mission orders. The "tradition" of mission orders demonstrated by Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore calls for future battalion commanders to coach their subordinate leaders about mission orders, tolerating mistakes in training while engendering a command climate which is based on the trust and confidence found in the application of the leadership competencies.

Maintain Initiative

Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore were all successful because they seized the initiative from the enemy and maintained it throughout the course of the battle. The main point here is that battalion commanders must be conscious of the impact of retention of the initiative on the outcome of the battle. Hand-in-hand with gaining and maintaining the initiative are rapid battlefield planning and mission orders.

Fire Support (Coordination/Synchronization)

Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore were successful in large measure because of their use of fire support in their operations. Vandervoort had to rely on mortars until naval gunfire was available, but then he took maximum advantage of this firepower to blunt a German armor attack. Lynch had a more varied array of ordnance at his disposal, bringing into play tanks, artillery, mortars, and fighter-bomber aircraft. Moore employed

a massive display of firepower on LZ X-Ray, orchestrating everything from aerial rocket fires to B-52 strikes. Clearly, fire support is vital to infantry survival and success on the battlefield.

Equally as important is the coordination and synchronization of fire support assets in conjunction with infantry maneuver. In this regard both Lynch and Moore are instructive. Lynch had trouble synchronizing his platforms with the assault on Hill 314 and very nearly placed his attacking echelons in jeopardy because of poor communications with the air support assets. Lynch also failed to completely integrate all available fire support assets, neglecting to incorporate the 8th Cav Regiment heavy mortars and the tanks into a coherent fire plan. Moore's performance, in contrast, seems to set the standard for orchestrating and synchronizing multiple fire support assets with the ground tactical plan. Finally, a review of both cases shows that the successful application of fire support is significantly dependent upon communications.

Innovation

The old saying that "necessity is the mother of invention" is as true in battalion-level combat as it is in any other pursuit. Successful battalion commanders must be able to innovate on the battlefield in order to solve tactical problems; they must be opportunists. Innovation on the battlefield dramatically contributes to

the success of the mission because the use of imagination, tempered with liberal doses of audacity, tenacity, and practiced, practical judgement, provides opportunities for friendly troops.

Vandervoort's innovative outposting of Turnbull in Neuville gave the 505th Regiment the advantage of forward power projection and defense in depth. Lynch's innovative use of his battalion headquarters company as an additional maneuver element and his imaginative assault formations gave his troops the additional combat power and security necessary to take Hill 314. And Moore's innovative air assault tactics and his "mad minute" gave his battalion the advantages of surprise and close-in protection from infiltration.

Innovation stands out as a catalyst of success, or even a combat multiplier of success. But innovation is based on sound doctrinal principles and the ability of the battalion commander to see the battlefield and envision the possibilities.

Coaching on the Battlefield

The study of Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore strongly implies that coaching on the battlefield is one of the battalion commander's most important roles. Coaching, in essence, is teaching, and the battalion commander constantly teaches his subordinate leaders about combat performance standards. Teaching, aside from the larger competency, Teaching and Counseling is more a professional

ethic than anything else. In fact, the philosophical concept of the battalion commander as a teacher has as its fundamental the practical application of the nine leadership competencies to the coaching and mentoring of his subordinates. Coaching should focus on terrain appreciation, mission orders, battlefield operating systems, communications, and combat leadership. The battalion commander has a professional obligation to coach and teach his subordinate leaders.

Coaching on the battlefield is basically as relevant and realistic as coaching a football or basketball team during a conference title game. The football coach does not stop teaching his assistant coaches during the game, and he does not stop teaching the nuances of offensive or defensive strategy to his unit captains on the sidelines. The same seems to have been true of Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore on their respective battlefields; they coached their subordinates to improve combat performance.

Communications

The overwhelming conclusion drawn from this study is that without effective communications the battalion mission is doomed to failure. Communications takes on many forms - from the technical to the personal - but it is such an important factor to success that a failure in any one of its various aspects jeopardizes mission accomplishment.

Communications is justifiably at the top of the list of leadership competencies because without effective communications, the other eight functions are hollow and impotent. Communications has got to be the priority interest item of the battalion commander because of its enormous influence on every other competency.

Training: Pre-Battle, Between Battles

This indicator of success is logically deduced from the analysis of the combat performance of the battalions of Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore. Vandervoort, for instance, seems to have conducted extremely high standard training for his battalion in between its action at Salerno and Normandy. The reason this is so instructive is that training during war is as important as training for the first battle. More remarkable is the training Lynch conducted after his battalion's first combat mission and the successful assault on Hill 314. Available evidence suggests he succeeded so dramatically because of his insistence on the fundamentals of infantry doctrine.

For Hal Moore, the fight at LZ X-Ray was the logical and long awaited culmination of almost eighteen months of pre-battle training. His battalion's superb performance unquestionably validated the superiority of his training program. Moore's stateside training program, incidentally, had as its foundation the development of technically and tactically efficient and cohesive soldier teams.

Casualty Evacuation and Recovery of KIA

As Moore so poignantly demonstrated, a battalion commander has no greater moral obligation than to care for his wounded soldiers and guarantee - as much as is humanly possible - the recovery of the remains of his soldiers killed in action.

Casualty evacuation is a difficult problem in battle because a unit has to thin its lines to detail litter carriers or "sweep" teams. In order not to lose momentum and sacrifice the initiative, the battalion commander has got to be innovative in collecting and evacuating his casualties. He has got to be inventive in balancing the requirement to protect his troops while he is conducting fire and maneuver to accomplish the mission. Casualty evacuation and KIA recovery is a performance indicator of success because a poor or inadequate evacuation plan can adversely affect the unit's morale and aggressiveness.

Location/Presence of the Battalion Commander-Forward

The absolute criticality of this performance indicator to the success of the mission is clearly evident from the study of the three battalion commanders. While the circumstances of each situation and METT-T considerations influence the battalion commander's actual location on the ground, the successful commander positions himself well forward to be able to rapidly assess and influence the battle. For the battalion commander,

commanding forward is an imperative of his command and control philosophy.

Define Success for Subordinates

The battalion commander must "paint the picture" of success for his subordinates before combat so they may execute his intent to accomplish the end-state of the task. Without an overtly recognizable "picture" of success, neither the subordinate leaders nor the battalion commander would have the necessary criteria to judge whether the unit is succeeding or failing. Without established criteria to assess the conduct of the battle, leaders up and down the chain of command deprive themselves of vital decision points for making adjustments which ultimately affect the outcome of the battle.

More importantly, this definition of success provides the subordinate leaders with sufficient guidance and intent to operate without orders. The definition of success is a must for mission orders. It also insures that subordinates don't commit their units toward the task in a manner which reduces the capability of the unit to conduct continuous operations. Lastly, the definition of success, described by the battalion commanders to his subordinates, gives the commander the opportunity to make sure that his plan is adequate enough to achieve the stated condition on the terminal end.

In summary, the conclusions of the study clearly point out the validity of the use of the nine leadership

competencies as broad performance functions for historical assessment. But the supporting SKA and LPI are considerably inadequate for use as a leader assessment tool during training exercises such as an NTC or JRTC rotation. The following recommendations address the steps necessary to correct this major deficiency.

Recommendations

The principal recommendation of this study is to close the existing gap between the Army's operational doctrine and its leadership doctrine. According to FM 100-5, leadership is considered to be the most essential of the four dynamics of combat power, but the leadership performance indicators supporting the nine leadership competencies are missing the AirLand Battle warfighting focus and spirit. This is a shortfall of major proportions.

The key point in this recommendation is that if the Center for Army Leadership intends to use the leadership performance indicators as a standard tool for leader assessment during training events, the tasks, SKA, and LPI must reflect current Army tactical doctrine.

This is especially true of the "Technical and Tactical Proficiency" competency - the keystone competency of the nine overarching functions. Perhaps the tasks, SKA, and LPI developed for this study should serve as a start point for the detailed development of this competency. By enlisting the assistance of the Center for

Army Lessons Learned and the various branch schools, a standardized leader tasks, conditions, and standards may be devised for evaluating leaders at NTC, JRTC, or CMTC.

The "Use of Available Systems" competency also needs revision. The emphasis on employing management technology is relevant and well intended, but the lack of battlefield-related tasks, SKA, and LPI detract from the focus of the competency. To align this competency with AirLand Battle doctrine, two additional tasks should be incorporated: "Effectively Employ Battlefield Operating Systems", and "Effectively Employ Command and Control Systems". Accordingly, this is fertile ground for a joint Center for Army Leadership and Center for Army Lessons Learned project.

This study has shown several other areas which need refinement along the lines of AirLand Battle doctrine. Battlefield coaching should be considered for incorporation as an SKA in either the "Supervision" competency or the "Teach and Counsel" competency.

The application of the "supervision" competency demonstrated that the SKA Enforce Safety Standards needs adjustments. Safety is the responsibility of every leader, and every leader should be taking active measures to protect his troops, in all circumstances. To make the LPI of this competency more applicable as a training assessment tool, consideration must be given to adding such indicators as: "employ fire control measures";

"command and control of direct and indirect fires"; "orchestrate tactical air support"; "protect troops from enemy fires"; and "protect troops from fratricide".

One of the subsidiary purposes of this study was to underscore the need for a more exacting definition of battlefield success as it pertains to battalion combat leadership. Even though the concept of commander's intent is firmly entrenched in current operational practice, there are indications that the statements of intent in operations orders are not used by commanders to convey a realistic, overtly measurable "picture" of the required end-state of the mission. For Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore it was absolutely crucial that the end state of the mission was described just as specifically as the means to achieve it. What future battalion commanders need is a mental "checklist" by which they can monitor the valid indicators of success at battalion level which will then facilitate opportunities for exploitation.

But it is difficult to find any overtly measurable criteria for success in combat outlined in U.S. Army doctrinal manuals. The closest definition of success found thus far has been one proposed by MAJ William G. Butler in a 1986 School for Advanced Military Studies Monograph. MAJ Butler postulated that: "Success is defined in relationship to the ends desired when an armed force engages in combat. Before combat the commander establishes the criteria by which the success or failure

of an engagement is to be judged."⁷ MAJ Butler preceded to point out that success is based on the ability of the commander to recognize clearly "those elements of the battle which relate directly to the established criteria."⁹ The ability of the commander to recognize "these elements" drives his subsequent decisions in combat and ultimately effects the outcome of battle. If the commander neglects to establish criteria for success and then compounds his error by not being able to recognize "the indicators of the valid criteria", he runs the risk of losing the fight.¹⁰

Without a doubt, the subject of assessing the valid criteria of battlefield success is interwoven with the U.S. Army philosophy of command and control and with AirLand Battle doctrine. How these criteria are established for battalions at the National Training Center, for example, is a subject which should be studied by the Center for Army Tactics, the Army Research Institute, and the Center for Army Leadership. The development of these criteria may very well become some of the most important and far-reaching performance indicators of the 1990's. Recommended that the Center for Army Leadership integrate the contributors of success from LTC K. E. Hamburger's combat leadership study into current leadership doctrine: (1) terrain sense; (2) single-minded tenacity; (3) ferocious audacity; (4) physical confidence; (5) practiced, practical judgement.

In summary, this study consists of an analysis of three battalion commanders who were successful in leading their organizations under fire. LTC's Vandervoort, Lynch, and Moore dramatically demonstrated that leadership is the most essential dynamic of combat power on the battlefield. By analyzing the performance of these officers - on whose shoulders so much rests in combat - this study has shown that the battalion commander is indeed the vital link between operational maneuver and small unit tactics.

Recent contingency operations reinforce the fact that future battalion commanders must be capable of successfully leading their units into intense combat, with little or no prior notice of the impending operation. And just like LTC Vandervoort at St. Mere-Eglise, LTC Lynch on Hill 314, and LTC Moore at LZ X-Ray, future battalion commanders must personify the most essential dynamic of combat power and lead at the forward edge of battle.

ENDNOTES

¹ LTG Arthur S. Collins, Jr., "Tactical Command," The Challenge of Military Leadership, p. 55.

² Ibid., p. 49.

³ Ibid., p. 55.

⁴ Ibid., p. 54.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "Infantry in Battle," The Infantry Journal, pp. 69-78.

⁷ MAJ William G. Butler, "How Should the Brigade and Division Commander Assess Success or Failure on the AirLand Battlefield, pp. 3-6.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

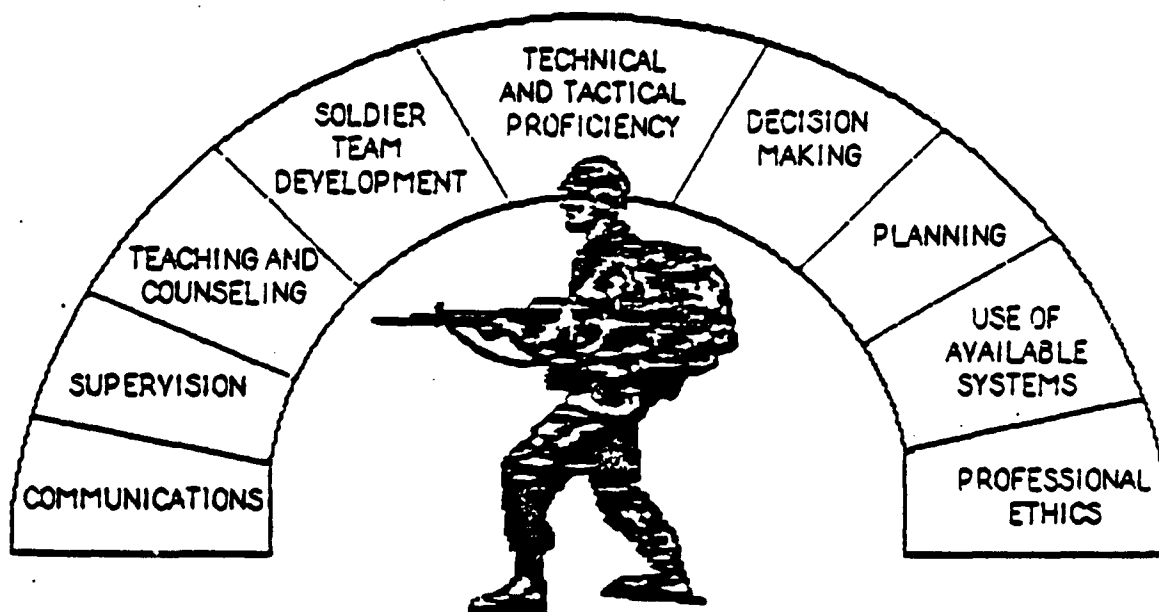
APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

The leadership factors and principles addressed in Chapter 2 are the basis for the Army's leadership education and training framework. This education and training must take place in a logical order, build on past experience and training, and have a warfighting focus. The nine leadership competencies provide a framework for leadership development and assessment. They establish broad categories of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that define leader behavior. They are areas where leaders must be competent.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES



The leadership competencies were developed in 1976 from a study of leaders from the rank of corporal to that of general officer. The study identified nine functions all leaders must perform if an organization is to operate effectively. Although all leaders exercise the competencies, their application depends on the leader's position in the organization. For example, the amount and detail of supervision a squad leader normally gives to his soldiers would be inappropriate for a battalion commander to give to his company commanders. Like the principles of leadership, the competencies are not simply a list to memorize. Use them to assess yourself and your subordinates and develop an action plan to improve your ability to lead.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications is the exchange of information and ideas from one person to another. Effective communications occurs when others understand exactly what you are trying to tell them and when you understand exactly what they are trying to tell you. You communicate to direct, influence, coordinate, encourage, supervise, train, teach, coach, and counsel. You need to be able to understand and think through a problem and translate that idea in a clear, concise, measured fashion. Your message should be easy to understand, serve the purpose, and be appropriate for your audience. This competency is addressed further in Chapter 2 of this manual.

SUPERVISION

You must control, direct, evaluate, coordinate, and plan the efforts of subordinates so that you can ensure the task is accomplished. Supervision ensures the efficient use of materiel and equipment and the effectiveness of

operational procedures. It includes establishing goals and evaluating skills. Supervising lets you know if your orders are understood and shows your interest in soldiers and the mission. Remember that oversupervision causes resentment and undersupervision causes frustration. By considering your soldiers' competence, motivation, and commitment to perform a task, you can judge the amount of supervision needed. This competency is discussed further in Chapters 5 and 6 of this manual.

TEACHING AND COUNSELING

Teaching and counseling refer to improving performance by overcoming problems, increasing knowledge, or gaining new perspectives and skills. Teaching your soldiers is the only way you can truly prepare them to succeed and survive in combat. You must take a direct hand in your soldiers' professional and personal development. Counseling is especially important in the Army. Because of the Army's mission, leaders must be concerned with the entire scope of soldiers' well-being. Personal counseling should adopt a problem-solving, rather than an advising, approach. You also need the judgment to refer a situation to your leader, the chaplain, or a service agency if it is beyond your ability to handle. You will, of course, follow up on this action. Performance counseling focuses on soldier's behavior as it relates to duty performance. Military counseling is discussed further in Chapter 6 of this manual, and FM 22-101 is devoted entirely to the subject.

SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT

You must create strong bonds between you and your soldiers so that your unit functions as a team. Since combat is a team activity, cohesive soldier teams are a battlefield requirement. You must take care of your soldiers and conserve and build their spirit, endurance, skill, and confidence to face the

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inevitable hardships and sacrifices of combat. The effectiveness of a cohesive, disciplined unit is built on bonds of mutual trust, respect, and confidence. Good leaders recognize how peers, seniors, and subordinates work together to produce successes. Soldier team development is significant in training and orienting soldiers to new tasks and units. You can help new soldiers become committed members of the organization if you work hard at making them members of your team. This competency is discussed further in FM 22-102 and Chapter 6 of this manual.

TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL PROFICIENCY

You must know your job. You must be able to train your soldiers, maintain and employ your equipment, and provide combat power to help win battles. You will gain technical proficiency in formal Army training programs, self-study, and on-the-job experience. You have to know your job so that you can train your soldiers, employ your weapons systems, and help your leader employ your unit. Tactical competence requires you to know warfighting doctrine so that you can understand your leader's intent and help win battles by understanding the mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time available. Technical proficiency and tactical proficiency are difficult to separate. This competency is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of this manual.

DECISION MAKING

Decision making refers to skills you need to make choices and solve problems. Your goal is to make high-quality decisions your soldiers accept and execute quickly. Decisions should be made at the lowest organizational level where information is sufficient. Like planning, decision making is an excellent way for you to develop your leadership team. Include subordinates

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in the decision-making process if time is available and if they share your goals and have information that will help produce high-quality decisions. Decision making is discussed further in Chapter 6 of this manual.

PLANNING

Planning is intended to support a course of action so that an organization can meet an objective. It involves forecasting, setting goals and objectives, developing strategies, establishing priorities, sequencing and timing, organizing, budgeting, and standardizing procedures. Soldiers like order in their lives, so they depend on you to keep them informed and to plan training and operations to ensure success. Including your subordinate leaders in the planning process is an excellent way for you to develop your leadership team. Remember, one of your tasks is to prepare your subordinates to replace you, if necessary. Planning is discussed further in Chapter 6 of this manual.

USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS

You must be familiar with techniques, methods, and tools that will give you and your soldiers the edge. Use of available systems literally means that you know how to use computers, analytical techniques, and other modern technological means that are available to manage information and to help you and your soldiers better perform the mission. This competency may vary dependent upon your leadership position. You must recognize, however, that understanding computer technological advances is important. You must use every available system or technique that will benefit the planning, execution, and assessment of training.

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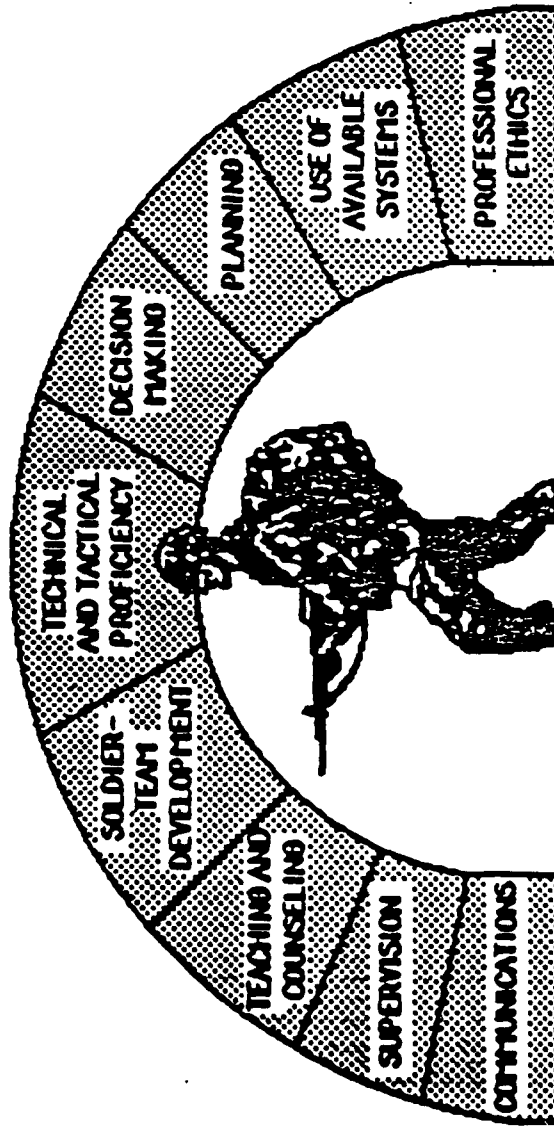
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Military ethics includes loyalty to the nation, the Army, and your unit; duty; selfless service; and integrity. This leadership competency relates to your responsibility to behave in a manner consistent with the professional Army ethic and to set the example for your subordinates.

As a leader, you must learn to be sensitive to the ethical elements of situations you face, as well as to your orders, plans, and policies. You must learn to use an informed, rational decision-making process to reason through and resolve ethical dilemmas and then teach your subordinates to do the same. Professional ethics is discussed further in Chapter 4 of this manual.

APPENDIX B

LEADERSHIP PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



**THE FOLLOWING ARE THE COMPETENCIES, TASKS, AND
SUPPORTING SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND ATTITUDES
USED TO DEVELOP THE LEADERSHIP PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (LPI)**

COMPETENCY: COMMUNICATION

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Communicate Effectively	Be a good listener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide feedback on what was briefed. - Display knowledge of information by properly implementing the commander's intent. - Be able to back brief information received, in own words. Back brief should include all key elements of information of the communication. - Respond to subordinate's input.
	Clearly communicate your intent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Majority of your subordinates understand the information passed by the commander/leader. - Through operations orders and other forms of direction, subordinates understand the action necessary to accomplish the mission desired by the leader. - Subordinates are able to describe/define the commander's intent in their own words. - Subordinates are able to describe actions they will need to take in order to meet the commander's intent.
	Communicate nonverbally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader actions complement/reinforce unit standards. - Leader demonstrates sense of urgency without panic.
	Communicate enthusiasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By verbal and nonverbal messages/actions, the leader displays genuine interest and enthusiasm. - Subordinates mimic the leader's intensity of interest.

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Communicate Effectively (Continued)		
	Clearly communicate your orders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orders complement that of higher headquarters. - Orders contain the essential who, what, when, how, where, why. - Subordinates are able to describe the explicit and implied tasks to be accomplished.
	Communicate standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates demonstrate and understand the acceptable level of performance as established by the leader. - Subordinates are able to describe unit standards.
	Communicate up, down, and horizontally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The leader passes information to subordinates to keep them informed, and asks for their input for decisions. - The leader requests information from superiors and passes information. - The leader shares information and ideas with peers and other equal type units. - The leader coordinates horizontally and vertically. - Plans/orders complement and/or supplement those of higher headquarters and adjacent units.
	Obtain feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader questions soldiers two echelons below to ascertain if information is being passed. - Leader asks questions of subordinates during briefings to ensure they understand the mission. - Leader elicits feedback from superiors to ensure clarity of communication.
	Stress simplicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader uses established SOPs for conducting missions. - Leader uses supplemental instructions to complete unique missions. - Subordinates two echelons below fully understand the instructions/mission.

COMPETENCY: DECISION MAKING

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Make Sound, Timely Decisions at the Lowest Practical Level	Accept prudent risks in subordinates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates take the initiative when appropriate. - Subordinates use innovative methods. - Subordinates make independent decisions while operating within the commander's intent. - Subordinates demonstrate that making honest mistakes does not mean failure.
	Be assertive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader decisively takes action. - Leader is candid. - Leader demonstrates the moral courage to stand by his convictions. - Leader demonstrates audacity (daring).
	Be creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader is not bound by barriers when seeking new methods. - Leader seeks advice of subordinates. - Leader uses original thought. - Leader uses imagination.
	Delegate authority to match responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader allows decisions to be made at the lowest level practical. - Subordinates make logical decisions to accomplish the mission(s) for which they are responsible. - Subordinates take the initiative to accomplish the mission. - Leader communicates boundaries for subordinates' authority. - Leader accepts decisions from subordinates for which they have responsibility - Leader delegates work not necessary for him to do.

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
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**Make Sound, Timely
Decisions at the Lowest
Practical Level
(Continued)**

Implement a plan

- Subordinates are able to describe what actions must be taken to accomplish a mission.
- Leader checks with superiors, subordinates, and peers to ensure the plan will not conflict/interfere with others.
- Leader checks on subordinates to ensure specific actions are being carried out.
- Leader continually checks to see if the plan needs adjustments.
- Leader makes best use of available material.
- Leader seeks advice of subordinates.
- Unit accomplishes the mission given very little or no preparation.

Improvise

**Include all leaders in
decision making**

- Subordinates actively give advice.
- Leader seeks out input from subordinates prior to making a decision (time permitting).
- Leader shares the problem with subordinates and looks for solutions with subordinates' help.

**Take appropriate action
(within commander's intent)
in the absence of specific
orders**

- Leader exploits opportunities.
- Leader seeks methods to improve current operations.
- Leader operates autonomously/isolated without loss of unit effectiveness.

Take calculated risks

- Leader accepts risks when the variables are weighted in his favor.
- Leader demonstrates initiative.
- Leader demonstrates innovation.
- Leader accepts responsibility.

TASK **Supporting SKA** **PERFORMANCE INDICATOR**

**Make Sound, Timely
Decisions at the Lowest
Practical Level
(Continued)**

Take decisive action

- Leader gathers information, analyzes the situation, analyzes courses of action, implements a plan, and supervises/evaluates until mission is accomplished.
- When appropriate, leader makes decisions in the absence of clear guidance.
- Leader does not delay decisions that can be made early.
- When appropriate, leader decides, although he has only part of the information he wants/needs.
- Leader accepts responsibility for his decisions.
- Leader exercises the authority and responsibility delegated by the superior.

Use and expect good judgment

- Leader uses all available information when making a decision.
- Leader seeks advice of superiors and subordinates, if appropriate.
- Actions pass the test of "the actions of a reasonable man."
- Decisions/actions are consistent with the professional Army ethic and the Laws of Land Warfare.

COMPETENCY: USE OF AVAILABLE SYSTEMS

**Effectively Employ
Management Technology**

**Appropriately filter
information to subordinates**

- Leader passes essential elements of information required to accomplish the mission while still maintaining commander's intent.

**Actively seek needed
information**

- Leader takes the initiative to seek pertinent management information which will assist in decision making and/or accomplishing the mission (time permitting).
- Leader uses technology to garner and process information.
- Leader is computer literate.

TASK **Supporting SKA** **PERFORMANCE INDICATOR**

**Effectively Employ
Management Technology
(Continued)**

**Manage resources
(time, people, information,
things)**

- Leader allocates resources to accomplish the mission.
- Leader identifies resources required to accomplish the mission.
- Resources are used with a view "over the horizon."
- Leader considers resource conservation measures.

COMPETENCY: PLANNING

Plan Effectively

**Adjust according to the
situation**

- Leader makes timely and appropriate changes to plans when added information dictates.
- When necessary, leader is willing to make changes.
- Subordinates are able to implement changes directed by the leader.

Be adaptable

- Leader makes appropriate adjustments in fluid situations.
- Subordinates implement changes with minimal loss of effectiveness.
- Leader plans for contingencies.

**Establish clear goals and
objectives**

- Subordinates understand/can express unit goals and objectives.
- Leader's goals and objectives are within the intent of the higher commander's goals and objectives.
- Leader determines tasks and milestones to meet goals and objectives.
- Subordinates understand sequencing and timing of tasks.

**Establish a sense of
common purpose for the
unit**

- Leader establishes priorities for accomplishing missions.
- Subordinates at least two echelons below understand the overall mission.
- Leader's purpose complements superior's purpose.
- Leader establishes tough, achievable goals and objectives.

**Plan Effectively
(Continued)**

Establish courses of action to meet goals and objectives

- Leader is able to describe the actions necessary to accomplish specific courses of action.
- Leader considers METT-T
- Leader considers resources available.

Organize

- Leader effectively sequences and times events using backward planning.
- Leader establishes priorities for accomplishing tasks.
- Leader identifies and allocates resources to accomplish the mission.

Plan beyond initial operations

- Contingency plans are developed.
- Resources are allocated with continuous operations in mind.
- Flexibility to change quickly is built into the plan.
- Leader's plan is consistent with commander's intent.

COMPETENCY: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Exemplify and Foster the Professional Army Ethic

Accept responsibility

- Leader fully acknowledges ownership of the failures and successes of his subordinates.
- Leader is responsible for whatever the unit does or fails to do.
- Leader accepts responsibility for his decisions.

Be a role model

- Leader leads by example.
- Subordinates mimic the leader's actions.
- Leader demonstrates proper ethical behavior at all times.
- Subordinates view the leader as a role model who exemplifies the professional Army ethic.

Be candid

- Leader is not afraid to admit a mistake/failure.
- Leader tells both superiors and subordinates when he feels they are wrong, as well as when they are right.
- Leader does not tolerate half-truths by subordinates.
- Leader is frank, open, and honest.

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Exemplify and Foster the Professional Army Ethic (Continued)		
Be physically fit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader demonstrates physical endurance after long operations without rest. - Leader actively participates in physical missions with subordinates. - Leader is able to meet APRT standards.
Demonstrate bearing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader's posture, appearance, and physical movement portray a person who has confidence in himself and his unit. - Leader displays confidence through fatigue, stress, and adverse weather conditions.
Demonstrate compassion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader demonstrates a genuine concern for the well-being of his subordinates. - Leader empathizes with his subordinates. - Subordinates perceive the leader as having their well-being in mind.
Demonstrate courage		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader overcomes fear of physical harm in order to accomplish the mission (shares hardships). - Subordinates describe the leader as courageous. - Leader does what is morally correct in the face of adversity. - Leader demonstrates tenacity (presses the fight).
Demonstrate integrity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader is honest, even in the most adverse conditions. - Leader acts ethically correct even when no one is observing. - Leader does not tolerate unethical behavior by superiors or subordinates. - Leader does not take short cuts to obtain selfish gains. - Leader obeys the Law of Land Warfare.
Demonstrate maturity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader does not make emotional decisions. - Leader makes decisions based on available information and logic. - Leader uses emotion to the organization's advantage.

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Exemplify and Foster the Professional Army Ethic (Continued)	Demonstrate self-discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader shows habit of doing what is correct even under the most adverse conditions. - Leader does not take the easy way out for the sake of comfort. - Leader is able to positively control his actions and emotions (he has strength of will).
	Develop the professional Army ethic in subordinates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates display loyalty to the nation, their unit, and their chain of command. - Subordinates are sensitive to ethical implications of behavior. - Leader shares ethical reasoning process with subordinates. - Leader leads by proper example. - Leader creates appropriate common values for the unit.
	Demonstrate selflessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader places the mission of the unit above his own self-interest. - Leader places well-being of his soldiers above his own. - Leader shows a genuine concern for his subordinates. - Leader shows loyalty to the organization.

COMPETENCY: SOLDIER TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Develop Soldier and Leader Teams	Accept honest mistakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates understand that mistakes don't always mean failure. - Leader encourages subordinates to take calculated, prudent risks, and is willing to accept less than perfect results. - Leader uses subordinate mistakes as a developmental vehicle.
	Be responsible to the unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader places needs of unit over self. - Subordinates participate in decisions when appropriate. - Subordinates are willing to place needs of the unit over their own needs. - Subordinates willingly obey leader's orders.

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Develop Soldier and Leader Teams (Continued)	Create strong unit identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaders and teams have common goals. - Subordinates demonstrate pride in appearance. - Leader enforces unit/team integrity for all missions. - Subordinates demonstrate pride in unit.
	Demonstrate caring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates can describe ways in which the leader cares for their well being. - Safety practices are observed. - Leader shares hardships with subordinates. - Leader considers and takes action to care for soldier's family. - Leader enforces health and welfare standards.
	Demonstrate trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader shows confidence in subordinates. - Subordinates take the initiative. - Subordinates participate in decisions. - Subordinates are allowed to operate independently when appropriate. - Leader communicates trust through his actions. - Subordinates feel free to innovate within the commander's intent. - Soldiers make decisions in the absence of the commander. - Leader demonstrates decision making to the lowest level.
	Develop cooperation and teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates actively work together toward common unit objectives. - Leaders and subordinates describe unit goals as their own. - Leader seeks input from subordinates on unit goals. - Both leaders and subordinates describe unit values as their own (courage, candor, commitment, competence). - Leader leads by example. - Subordinates indicate their leader is with them in most difficult times.
	Develop subordinates to replace you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader delegates authority whenever possible. - Logical chain of command is established and used. - Subordinates continue the mission during temporary absences of the leader. - Leader allows subordinates to learn from mistakes.

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Develop Soldier and Leader Teams (Continued)		
	All display confidence in self and other team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates demonstrate confidence in their own skills. - Leader demonstrates competence. - Leader leads by example. - Subordinates demonstrate trust, confidence, and respect for their leader and peers. - Leader demonstrates trust and respect for subordinates.
	Encourage boldness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates demonstrate moral courage. - Leader expects subordinates to tell him when mistakes are made. - Subordinates feel free to take prudent risks.
	Encourage candor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates openly discuss missions with leaders. - Subordinates demonstrate freedom to raise objections with the leader. - Leader encourages subordinates' advice in mission planning.
	Encourage initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates take appropriate action in the absence of orders. - Subordinates actively assume responsibility for their actions. - Leader rewards initiative. - Subordinates actively exploit opportunities. - Leader encourages subordinates to take calculated risks.
	Encourage innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader expects subordinates to use their imagination in completing new missions. - Subordinates demonstrate willingness to use new methods without fear of reprisal. - Leader rewards innovation. - Leader allows subordinates to take calculated risks. - Subordinates are always on the lookout for improved ways to accomplish the mission.
	Encourage speedy action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader and subordinates make timely decisions and take decisive action, using good judgment. - Subordinates demonstrate a sense of urgency without panic. - Subordinates are time-sensitive to missions.

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Develop Soldier and Leader Teams (Continued)	Generate unit cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Esprit de corps and motivation are high. - Others outside the organization see the unit as a winner. - Subordinates clearly see their unit as a winner. - Subordinates indicate a sense of belonging. - Leader uses the buddy system. - Leader adjusts team goals and priorities as necessary. - Leader actively communicates with subordinates. - Leader cares for soldier needs (training, supplies, personal needs). - Individual goals are the same as team and unit goals. - Subordinates have high regard for their unit identity.
	Include subordinate leaders in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader asks for subordinate input on decisions. - Leader provides feedback to subordinate leaders on decisions. - Subordinates indicate that the leader asks for their advice on decisions.
	Instill desire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subordinates exhibit the will to win. - Subordinates place mission over self. - Leader teaches and coaches subordinates. - Leader and subordinates live the professional Army ethic.
	"Provide tough, repetitive, exacting training"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soldiers demonstrate competence in individual and collective skills. - Leader establishes high but attainable standards. - Subordinates display confidence in their abilities. - Leaders demand that soldiers and units train as they expect to fight. - Leaders focus training and unit activities on the warfighting mission

TASK	Supporting SKA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Develop Soldier and Leader Teams (Continued)	Train Leader Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader trains subordinates to assume higher levels of responsibility. - Leader encourages/rewards initiative. - Leader clearly specifies responsibilities of subordinate leaders. - Subordinate leaders demonstrate shared responsibility for mission accomplishment.

COMPETENCY: SUPERVISE

Effectively Supervise Subordinates	Command forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader shares hardships with subordinates. - Leader leads by example. - Leader spends time with his soldiers. - Leader personally inspects selected tasks accomplished by subordinates.
	Don't oversupervise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader gives mission-type orders. - Leader demonstrates confidence in subordinates. - Leader delegates authority equal to responsibility. - Leader accepts subordinate plans which accomplish the mission, even if different than leader would have prepared. - Leader provides the standards and allows the methods to be set by subordinates.
	Enforce safety standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader considers and integrates safety measures into every action. - Subordinates adhere to safety standards when operating alone. - Short cuts are not taken in favor of time over safety. - Leader makes use of buddy system. - Unnecessary safety standards are challenged if they might interfere with training realism.
	Establish controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader uses level of control that does not hinder appropriate flexibility, innovation, and/or initiative. - Subordinates demonstrate an understanding of the parameters within which they can operate.

TASK SUPPORTING SKA PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Effectively Supervise Subordinates (Continued)

Establish/enforce standards

- Subordinates demonstrate their knowledge of unit standards.
- Subordinates expect corrective action/punishment for substandard performance.
- Leader leads by example.
- Leader checks to ensure standard compliance and conducts performance evaluations.
- Leader uses feedback to determine/initiate corrective action.
- Subordinates understand and initiate corrective action.

Follow up on corrective action

- Leader conducts personal inspections of corrective action.
- Leader requires feedback from subordinates on corrective action taken.
- Leader conducts unannounced reviews of standards of compliance.
- Leader checks to ensure that information has been disseminated to the lowest level.

Provide feedback

- Subordinates understand corrective action required.
- Subordinates understand when standards are met or exceeded.
- Leader keeps superior informed.

COMPETENCY: TEACHING AND COUNSELING

Teach and Counsel Subordinates

Coach/counsel subordinates

- Leader provides advice and direction to subordinates.
- Leader provides active feedback to subordinates about corrective action.
- Subordinates successfully make corrections on shortcomings.
- Leader counsels subordinate leaders in private.

Demand action

- Leader requires corrective action on shortcomings within a prescribed time period.
- Subordinate initiative is expected and rewarded.
- Inaction or substandard performance is addressed quickly.

Teach and Counsel Subordinates (Continued)

Develop subordinates

- Leader allows subordinates to participate in decision making process.
- Leader allows subordinates to make independent decisions within their areas of responsibility.
- Leader provides active feedback to subordinates on their performance, good and bad.
- Subordinates are able to describe actions required to improve their performance as generated by the leader.

Teach skills

- Leader leads by example.
- Subordinates demonstrate competency in required skills at their grade level.
- Leader provides continual feedback on performance.

Train for war

- Leader does not take short cuts for the sake of ease of comfort.
- Subordinates understand that the purpose of training is a rehearsal for war.
- Leader establishes and requires adherence to tough but realistic standards.
- Leader focuses unit on warfighting mission.
- Leader prepares soldiers mentally and physically for war.

Use an awards and discipline system

- Subordinates demonstrate knowledge of unit standards.
- Subordinates understand what action will be rewarded.
- Leader praises subordinate leaders in public.
- Subordinates understand what action will be punished.
- Leader chastises subordinate leaders in private.
- Leader has and uses an established awards and punishment system based on established standards.
- Leader acknowledges and rewards good judgment in subordinates.

COMPETENCY: TECHNICAL and TACTICAL COMPETENCY

Be Technically and Technically Proficient

Standards are in accordance with those prescribed by/in field and technical manuals, MOS/MQS guides, ARTEP Manuals...

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